

# THE TIMES

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Meet Ruud Gullit  
MAGAZINE



**DIANA'S CHOIRBOYS**

WEEKEND



## Blair offers Adams choice of history



"They've gone. We can put the mistletoe up again"

By MARTIN FLETCHER AND NICHOLAS WATT

TONY BLAIR looked Gerry Adams directly in the eye at 10 Downing Street yesterday and offered him a "choice of history" — violence and despair or peace and progress.

The first Prime Minister for 76 years to play host to an Irish republican leader, Mr Blair said: "It is important that you remain committed to peaceful means. If we were to slip back, I believe we would slip back to something worse than what came before."

Mr Adams duly recommitted himself to the principles of democracy and non-violence, but for his part told Mr Blair that "all the hurt and

grief and division which has come from British involvement in Irish affairs has to end".

The 55-minute encounter was long on symbolism, short on substance, but rich in drama and historical overtones. The meeting took place in the Cabinet room where Lloyd George and Michael Collins, father of the IRA, negotiated the treaty that formalised Ireland's partition in 1921. And it was the same room that was the target of three IRA mortar bombs in 1991.

The meeting began with the seven members of the Sinn Féin delegation shaking hands with the seven British officials. A Sinn Féin spokesman said first names were used, and tea and coffee served. Both sides

said that there had been a real engagement that went beyond "chanting mantras and slogans".

Addressing the world's media on the steps of Number Ten, Mr Adams called the meeting "a moment in history". There had been many bad episodes in Irish history but this was a good one, he said. "I think we engaged."

A Sinn Féin spokesman added that his party's delegation had touched on the normal issues, such as prisoners and demilitarisation. It had reiterated its demand for a new Bloody Sunday inquiry, but "this was more about trying to get beyond the details of negotiations and engage at a personal level, and I think we were successful in that

regard". He described the meeting as relaxed and cordial.

Downing Street said that it had been "constructive and positive". Mr Blair had emphasised that there could be no constitutional change in Northern Ireland without majority consent, and that Sinn Féin would be ejected from the Stormont peace talks if the IRA returned to violence.

The one sour note occurred earlier in the day when Mr Adams told a radio interviewer that he wished Liam Avelin, the IRA prisoner who escaped from the Maze prison on Wednesday night, good luck. Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, told him the comment was "not helpful". A Sinn Féin official privately admitted that the

timing of the escape was unfortunate.

The Sinn Féin delegation arrived at 1.40pm to find rival crowds gathered at the entrance to Downing Street to cheer and jeer them as they walked up to No 10. There were cries of "murderers" and "New Labour, new traitors".

Rita Restorick, the mother of the last British soldier killed in Northern Ireland, thrust a Christmas card containing a photograph of her dead son into Mr Adams' hand and said she hoped he was sincere about peace. Mr Adams said he hoped the negotiations would make the suffering of people like her part of "our painful history".

Mr Blair defended the meeting,

saying the Government should take "every risk it can" to secure peace, but Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, accused the Prime Minister and Mr Adams of "dancing on the grave of the Ulster dead". He said: "God help this country when its leaders are prepared to stoop so low in order to attain a moment of two of peace which will soon be shattered by a colossal IRA bomb".

As Mr Adams walked away he waved to demonstrators in Whitehall and punched the air. With a taboo broken, Downing Street predicted further meetings.

Jeers and cheers, page 9  
Leading article, page 23

## Queen bids sad farewell to old family friend

By ALAN HAMILTON

THE QUEEN'S eyes were glassy, and she appeared to struggle to contain her emotions. The Princess Royal dabbed her eyes with a white handkerchief, and the Prince of Wales shook his head. The Royal Family, schooled in the art of stoicism even in grief, found it particularly hard yesterday to bid farewell to an old, dear, and trusted friend.

In the gathering gloom and biting wind of a December afternoon at South Railway jetty in Portsmouth harbour, the Queen and many other members of her family watched as, after 43 years and 334 days in commission, the Royal Yacht *Britannia* was paid off into a retirement that will be somewhat less glorious than her naval service.

For the Royal Family, it was a difficult parting, forced on them by rising costs and a tide of opinion moving towards a much leaner Monarchy. As the Queen descended the gang

plank for the last time, she walked briskly as if not wishing to prolong the unhappy moment, but she bit her lip as she threw the yacht a final brief backward glance.

*Britannia's* final moment as the most familiar and immaculate vessel in the fleet came shortly after 3.30, as the beginnings of a pale winter sunset fought through threatening rain clouds. The first commanding officer, Commodore Anthony Morrow, stepped forward on the dock side, stood to attention, and saluted his ship and its 19 officers and 217 Royal Yachtsmen lined along its three decks.

The chill breeze tugged at the vessel's flags, and blew up the sailors' collars in Mexican waves. One yachtsman, at attention on the top rail, lost his hat. The band of the Royal Marines marched up and down the dockside, beating retreat as they have done before the Queen on so many foreign quays.

As the notes of *Sunset* echoed from the bugles, *Britannia's* flags were slowly lowered in unison: the Union flag at the jackstaff and mizzenmast, the Lord High Admiral's flag at the foremast, and the white ensign at the stern.

From that moment, *Britannia* was a decommissioned ship. Only the Royal Standard remained briefly flying at the main mast, to indicate that the Queen, although she had stepped ashore for the last time, was still on the dockside to watch the painful process of



The Queen, flanked by her eldest son and her husband, dabbing her eyes at the formal decommissioning service for her yacht *Britannia* in Portsmouth harbour yesterday

her vessel being released from royal duty in preparation for life as a tourist attraction in People's Britain.

*Britannia* herself might have preferred to creep away quietly to prepare for her second career in Manchester or Edinburgh, but it was not to be. The Queen went on board for a buffet lunch and to say farewell to the crew. She was accompanied by a large contingent of her family, including the Duke of Edinburgh, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, the Princess Royal, Prince Edward, with his girlfriend Sophie Rhys Jones, the Duke of Kent, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester and Princess Alexandra.

All who were entitled wore naval uniform, including the Princess Royal, Commandant

of Women in the Royal Navy, and her husband, Captain Timothy Laurence, whom she outranked. The Queen wore red wool, Prince Edward a plain grey suit, and the Princess Royal's son, Peter Phillips, a bomber jacket.

The ceremony was also watched by 2,200 former officers and yachtsmen who had served in *Britannia* and their families. Many of them, too, shed a tear at the going of a vessel to which they were greatly attached. In a message distributed to all past and present crew, the Queen said they had provided "magnificent support" to the Royal Family.

The Queen ended her message with a hint of her own feelings: "It is with sadness that we must now say goodbye

to *Britannia*. It is appropriate that with this final event, she bows out in the style which is so typical of the manner in which her business has always been conducted."

Crewmen and families also joined in a short and moving religious service on the quay side, with prayers for the vessel and all who had served in her, and the singing of hymns — including the last verse of that which sends a shiver down the spine of any seafarer, "Eternal Father, strong to save, whose hand doth still the restless wave".

As the Royal Marines band marched off playing *Hearts of Oak*, *A Life On The Ocean Wave*, and *Auld Lang Syne*, the crowd broke into applause. But the Queen and several other members of her

party looked almost desolate. The Queen recovered her composure with great speed, however, as the proceedings took on a note of complete informality. Royal Family members mixed freely with the crowds, smiling, chatting, and posing for photographs. Deprived of her yacht, the Queen went behind the dock, into Number One Oil Lubricating Shed for tea with the crewmen's families.

The end of *Britannia's* naval career is not as ignominious as that of one of her predecessors, the *Victoria & Albert III*. She was last used in royal service in 1939, spent the war as a depot ship in Portsmouth harbour, and was finally broken up at Faslane on the Clyde in 1955.

Much more spirited was the

end that befell the previous *Britannia*, built as a racing yacht for the future Edward VII, and inherited by his son, George V. She won 231 races and, by the terms of King George's will, was towed to a spot off the Isle of Wight,

where she was gloriously and ceremoniously scuttled. Her present-day namesake will shortly creep away to an obscure corner of Portsmouth harbour to have her stores and valuables removed before she is handed over to the people.

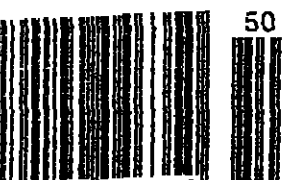


The Princess Royal in naval uniform

**Seoul crisis**  
South Korea's financial crisis sent shock waves around the world as investors speculated that its economy could be near to insolvency. Pages 27, 29

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## Labour's rebels threaten second protest over cuts

By JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR MPs last night threatened to stage a second revolt over benefit cuts as the Government drew back from taking strong disciplinary measures against Wednesday night's rebels.

Tony Blair and Nick Brown, the Chief Whip, decided not to confront the 47 Labour MPs who voted against the Government on measures to cut lone parent benefit. They ruled out any suspensions and said most MPs would merely get a "dressing down" with a warning about future behaviour.

Three MPs — Brian Sedgemore, Bob Wareing and John Marek — are expected to be reported to the NEC but no further action is likely.

The size of the revolt stunned the leadership and made severe punishment impossible. One minister and four ministerial aides had resigned over the issue.

Some rebels, buoyed by the strength of the revolt and sensing that they had escaped more punitive measures, threatened further disruption. They rallied round a warning given by Lord Ashley, joint chairman of the Parliamen-

tary all-party disability group, that if the Government went ahead with taxing or means-testing disability benefit last night's rebellion would look tame in comparison. Such cuts are being studied as part of the comprehensive spending review.

David Winnick, MP for Walsall North, who defied the Government, on Wednesday said yesterday: "Many of us are determined to defend the welfare state. The rebels were far from being repentant, he said, claiming that any changes over disability payments would "meet with a far greater revolt than last night".

Other rebels agreed that the lone parent revolt was a "warning shot" to signal widespread unease among the parliamentary party about any measures which would penalise the poor.

While the Prime Minister stood by the lone parent cuts party strategists conceded that many MPs had supported the Government with a heavy heart. Several MPs said that if it had been put to a free vote the rebels would have won. There was concern that any

precipitate action by the whips could have increased the sense of anger and could have resulted in loyal MPs breaking away.

Mr Brown is now calling in all the 47 MPs who voted against the Government to see him or one of the other whips. They will be given a "verbal warning" or "yellow card" with the threat that if they continue to oppose the Government stronger action will be taken. The thirty or so MPs who abstained are not expected to be called in.

The three MPs who could face further disciplinary action have been singled out because they have persistently spoken out against the Government or have already been given a warning about their behaviour.

Yesterday the Prime Minister emphasised that MPs had been "elected as new Labour and would now govern as new Labour" and that the welfare-to-work programme had been an integral part of the manifesto.

Leading article and Letters, page 23

## Scent of scandal as First Lady is ejected

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

A MUSTY former gentleman's club on Fifth Avenue, which only recently admitted women, was licking its wounds yesterday after a over-eager attendant threw out Hillary Clinton for breaking the house rules by spraying on perfume.

Unfortunately for the venerable University Club, Mrs Clinton was in the company of Cindy Adams, the self-styled "First Lady of New York Gossip" who reported the incident in her column.

Mrs Clinton visited the club on Wednesday to make a speech to a \$1,000-a-plate lunch organised by the Women's Leadership Forum of the Democratic National Committee while her husband was out Christmas shopping in New York. After her speech, Mrs Clinton then withdrew into a cavernous club-room with leather chairs, where she encountered the irrepressible Mrs Adams, an old acquaintance.

The gossip columnist had already provoked the wrath of one of the club's elderly attendants by trying to use her mobile phone to inform her editors that she was running

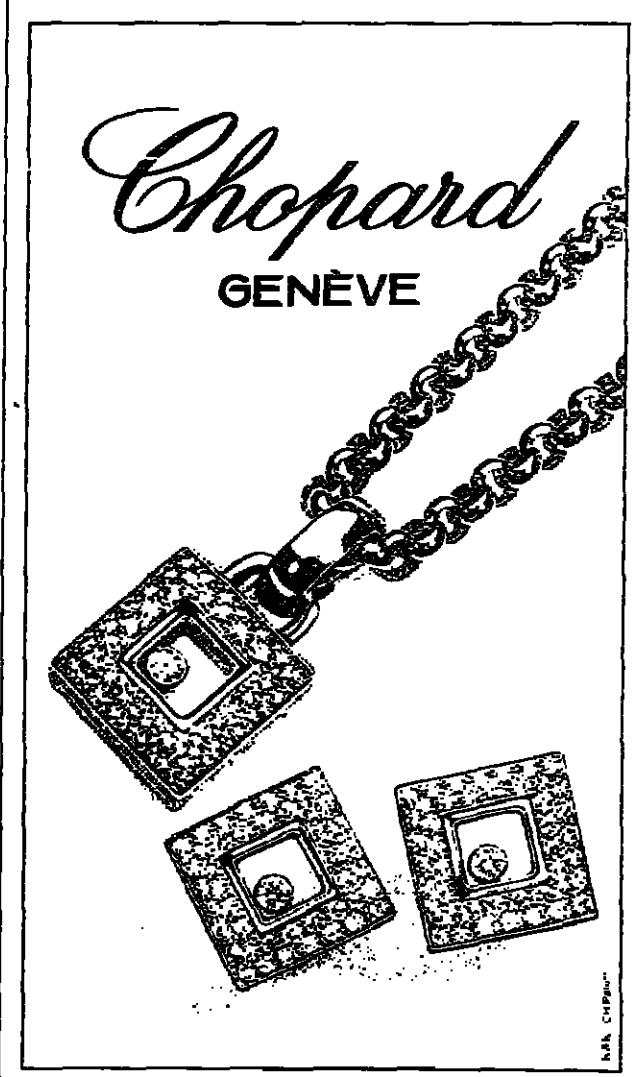
late. When she tried to show Mrs Clinton a sample of her new fragrance, brand-named "Gossip", the attendant drew the line.

No sooner had Mrs Clinton sprayed on some of the perfume, than he intervened. "This is not permitted," he said. "We have rules here. We will not tolerate this."

Mrs Adams informed the guard that he was talking to the First Lady of the United States, but he was oblivious. "This is not acceptable behaviour. You will have to leave," Mrs Clinton stood up abruptly and declared: "Let's go."

Members expressed dismay about the club's dubious hospitality, although some were gratified that clubroom etiquette had been upheld. The White House described Mrs Adams's version of events as "overblown."

The University Club, founded in 1899 by graduates of Columbia, Harvard and Yale, was a men-only institution until forced by a landmark court ruling to admit women in 1987. The club's management refused to comment — because that is also against house rules.



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# Victory over backbench rebels marks beginning of Blair's reign

Fresh in our minds is often the most recent battle — when we should be remembering the last but one. We watch the Labour whips rock back on their heels at the force and suddenness of Wednesday's rebellion, and we recall the last times "Government hit by backbench rebellion" regularly filled the front pages.

It was during John Major's Premiership, and most often over Europe — although other minorities too (over VAT on fuel for instance) nibbled away at his authority. At first the rebellions seemed containable, but each undermined the whips' discipline further.

weakened morale and soured relationships within the party. By the end, Mr Major's leadership itself had been discredited by the internecine warring, and he fell — though to the electorate: never quite to his Tory challengers.

"Ah," we say, noting Mr Blair's first big brush with backbench insurrection, "that's how it all started for the last Government too. It's downhill from here." We assume that one rebellion must be precursor to the next; each one worse than the last, just as it was for Major.

And we forget the one that went before. But Tony Blair does not forget; indeed I think

the history of that battle is the Prime Minister's and his Chancellor's text. For Margaret Thatcher and Geoffrey Howe, her first Chancellor, the early insurrections were not the beginning of the end. They were the beginning of the beginning. That was the time she stamped her authority on her party. That was the time she saw off a growing challenge from the Tory Left. That was when she beat the Wets. That was the time and those were the battles which ushered in a half decade when she carried all before her.

I remember those early mutinies. I was part of one or two of them. I rebelled on the



MATTHEW PARRIS  
POLITICAL SKETCH

assisted places scheme — there were only a couple of us. I rebelled on the cuts to funding of school transport, causing many parents to lose their right to free bus trips for their children. There were more of us in that rebellion. And I remember an insipient mutiny on 5 per cent cuts to welfare benefits which rumbled — and was successfully headed off.

Our argument was always the same, and it is the argument Labour's rebels now

employ: that the proposed saving was modest, the hurt to the affected was cruel, and the bad publicity immense. Why look hard hearted for the sake of a few pence? The expression "candle-end economies", used derisively, was very fashionable at the time.

The whips' reply was always the same too: part of it spoken, part of it implied. Explicitly they pointed out that holding the line always involves little meannesses along

the frontier. By implication they had it that a reputation for hard headedness was actually an asset and not to be shed away from. And they translated this hard headedness into terms even we backbenchers could understand. Rebels were punished by exile (though not forever) from government positions.

We had not thought it would be like that. Plotting in the Commons tea room we had romantic notions of where our courage might lead. We thought we might win the argument. We were wrong. We thought our small shows of solidarity (backed as they always were, by a much larger

group of colleagues who would grumble but toe the line) would impress upon the whips and the Prime Minister the need to moderate the tone and perhaps alter the direction of government. We were wrong. She took no notice.

And we thought that, however angry the Chief Whip might be over the inconvenience we caused him, he and his Prime Minister would privately respect us for our willingness to stand up for ourselves. Few of us actually believed we were harming our long-term career prospects. Some even thought a little early rebellion might be a smart career move.

Boy were we wrong! Mrs Thatcher required obedience, respected most those who complied best, and rewarded them. It was as simple as that. She won. We lost. The penny began to drop. The threat from the Wets began to recede as the younger and more ambitious realised they had to play her game.

In retrospect, our first mutiny was the beginning of her victory. If Margaret Thatcher were chatting to a worried Tony Blair this morning, I have little doubt what she would be saying.

Leading article  
and Letters, page 23

## Labour takes on the French over currency club

FROM PHILIP WEBSTER AND CHARLES BREMNER IN LUXEMBOURG

BRITAIN and France were on course for a head-on clash over the single currency last night after Tony Blair refused to give ground in his fight for a seat on the "club" that will oversee it.

As he arrived in Luxembourg for his biggest trial of strength in the European Union, Mr Blair for the first time acknowledged that he might block a deal at the summit if he fails to get a satisfactory deal. With the atmosphere souring, British officials openly blamed the French for being the main obstacle to an agreement that would allow Britain to sit on the so-called Euro X committee.

An official said: "It is wrong

to see this as Britain versus the rest of Europe. From all our contacts in recent days, it is quite clear that this is really a French worry and the others are not so bothered."

The French were stung by the suggestion that they were to blame. A senior diplomat said: "This is a quarrel of Britain's making."

By suggesting that he was prepared to see deadlock this weekend, and get the issue sorted out under the British presidency over the next six months, Mr Blair was engaging in some traditional summit brinkmanship. But European diplomats were surprised that he had taken such a hard line, and predicted that he would at some stage

have to retreat. Mr Blair told the Cabinet yesterday morning that it was not clear how the issue would be resolved at the summit. He was determined that the council of finance ministers should remain the main economic decision-making body of the EU and that, if a single currency committee was set up, "our presence must be the rule rather than the exception."

Afterwards a senior official said: "We would like it settled this weekend, but it would not be the end of the world if it ran over to our presidency." The Prime Minister, Gordon Brown and Robin Cook flew in for the summit insisting that Britain should sit at the single currency table "as a matter of course" as full participants, leaving only during discussions of such issues as the possible exchange rate at which a country outside the single currency might join.

Amid signs that Germany and France were looking for compromise over the "outs" — Britain, Sweden, Denmark and Greece — Mr Blair was being urged to soften his stance. It was clear he was not yet ready to do so. Downing Street had been hoping that special "chemistry" at heads of government meetings would enable him to reach agreement with Jacques Chirac and Helmut Kohl.

M Chirac's spokesman held out the hope of some kind of "associate" status for Britain and the other "outs". Although this fell short of Mr Blair's demands, European diplomats predicted that a deal would eventually have to be built around a form of words that allowed regular attendance without a formal place.

Jean-Claude Juncker, Prime Minister of Luxembourg, has been leading the search for a deal this week, with visits to all European capitals. However, he said in Athens that it was up to the "outs" to give ground.

Britain is nervous about being left outside, even though membership of the single currency has been ruled out during the present parliament. Mr Brown and Mr Blair have argued that a range of issues, including employment policy, would be discussed and would be of particular relevance to Britain. There are also fears, particularly among Eurosceptics, that once set up, the group might be tempted to discuss areas deeply sensitive to Britain such as harmonisation of tax rates and social security policy.



The White Ensign lowered on Britannia during decommissioning yesterday

## Don't meddle with Radio 4, Speaker tells BBC chief

THE Speaker of the House of Commons has issued a stern warning to the BBC not to reschedule *Yesterday in Westminster* or *The Week in Westminster* as part of a planned shake-up of BBC Radio 4.

Betty Boothroyd has this week told Sir Christopher Bland, chairman of the corporation, in the bluntest possible terms not to go ahead with the changes.

In a letter which has been placed in the Library of the House of Commons Miss Boothroyd says she hopes Sir Christopher will accept "that the proposed rescheduling of *Yesterday in Westminster* and *The Week in Westminster* are not regarded by parliamentarians as meeting your public service responsibilities and that you will modify your proposals accordingly".

Earlier Sir Christopher told Miss Boothroyd that between 8.30am and 9am (when *Yesterday in Westminster* is broadcast) Radio 4 loses audience

Miss Boothroyd wants coverage to be unchanged, says Raymond Snoddy

faster than any other radio network. The rescheduling of the parliamentary segment was being looked at as part of a review of all BBC news programmes. The BBC plan is to reschedule *The Week in Westminster* from its present Saturday morning position to Thursday evenings, a time which at the moment attracts considerably lower audiences than Saturday mornings.

In her letter of December 8 the Speaker said she was not persuaded by Sir Christopher's offer to come and explain the BBC proposals

once the news review was complete. "At that stage, however, your decisions will no doubt be irrevocable," she pointed out.

The BBC chairman has now replied, assuring the Speaker that decisions would not have been made once the news review is complete.

Sir Christopher said he would regard a meeting with Miss Boothroyd at that time "as an important part of the consultative process before finalising the Radio 4 schedules and our parliamentary coverage".

The row over parliamentary coverage is just one aspect of wide-ranging changes to the Radio 4 schedules planned by James Boyle, controller of Radio 4, and due for implementation next April 1.

It is not clear how well the traditionally conservative Radio 4 audience will take to dozens of changes coinciding with the loss of some long-running programmes.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

## Thousands warned about tainted water

More than 40,000 people in Glasgow were warned not to drink, wash or prepare food using tap water after domestic supplies were contaminated by diesel fuel. Soldiers helped to deliver fresh water to Clydebank, Bearsden, Milngavie, Paisley, Dumfries and Haddington, and customers were advised to boil water from the 230 standby tanks.

Casualty units and GPs were put on alert for any poisoning victims. Greater Glasgow Health Board said that anyone who had drunk or prepared food in the contaminated water might suffer sickness and nausea, but nothing more serious. Washing in it could cause skin and eye irritations.

The alert came after customers complained on Wednesday that the water smelt and tasted of turpentine. It is believed to have been caused by diesel leaking into supplies at the Burncrooks water treatment works near Loch Lomond. The West of Scotland Water Board has launched an inquiry into the contamination and into claims that it was too slow to react to customers' concerns.

## Virgin balloon stranded

The *Virgin Global Challenger* balloon will be stranded in Algeria until the beginning of next week, as diplomatic negotiations continue to try to bring it back to Morocco. However, the flight around the globe will proceed as technicians who have made an initial inspection of the balloon have predicted that it can be used again.

## £7,500 award for nurse

A theatre sister has won £7,500 from a consultant anaesthetist after he hit her on the head during an operation. In what is thought to be the first successful claim for assault and harassment brought by the Royal College of Nursing, Andrea Sifton of Bury, Greater Manchester, sued Bury Health Care NHS Trust and the anaesthetist.

## Visit for jailed nurse

The Saudi Arabian authorities have given unprecedented permission for Lucille McLauchlan, the British nurse jailed for her part in the murder of an Australian colleague, to enjoy a conjugal visit from her husband on Christmas Day and Boxing Day. McLauchlan was allowed to marry Grant Ferris last month.

## Warning over NHS

The promise that £1 billion will be saved by cutting NHS red tape could be illusory, the British Medical Association said. Mac Armstrong said: "The changes to the NHS outlined in the White Paper will need better management, not less management, and that will only come at a price. We have not been told where this money is to come from."

## Oyston unfit for radio

Owen Oyston, the businessman, jailed for rape and indecent assault, was deemed by the Radio Authority, the industry regulatory body, to be an unfit person to hold commercial radio licences. The decision raises questions over the future of four commercial radio licences, one in England and three in Northern Ireland. The authority is now writing to all shareholders of the stations.



## Ear-print evidence

In a test case that could make British legal history, an unemployed man charged with a string of burglaries on the evidence of ear-prints found at scenes of crimes was remanded in custody until January 8 next year at Horseferry Road magistrate's court. It is the first time in Britain that police are relying on ear-print evidence.

## EU states fail to agree expansion of membership

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN LUXEMBOURG

BRITAIN's plans for a London conference to launch the eastward expansion of the European Union may fall by the wayside unless EU leaders settle a row over the guest list at their summit in Luxembourg today.

Tony Blair would like to invite 12 states who want EU membership to a London conference in the spring.

The Prime Minister has asked the Queen to open what was intended to be a crowning event in Britain's six-month presidency of the EU. However, the 15 EU states have failed to negotiate the bloc's expansion, how to pay for it and what to do with Turkey. The latter's desire to be treated the same as the central European candidates was rejected last night by Jean-Claude Juncker, the Luxembourg prime minister and

host to the summit. "There is no comparison between Turkey and the 11 other applicant countries. No-one is tortured in those countries but that, unfortunately, is the case in Turkey," he said.

The leaders are expected to settle on a minimalist outcome on Saturday, and invite Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia and Cyprus to start accession negotiations in April with a view to becoming full EU members before the middle of the next decade.

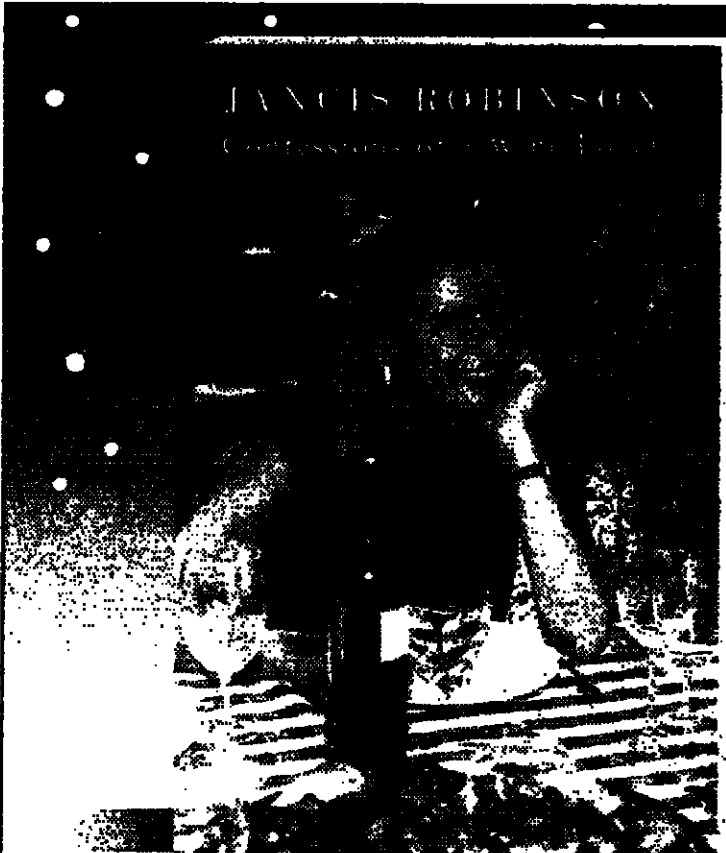
To keep the second-tier candidate states, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Lithuania and Latvia — happy, they will be given promises of close links with Brussels, and an extra £75 million in aid over the next two years. All 11 candidates will attend a ceremonial start to negotiations in late March.

Turkey, a Nato member which first applied for EU membership in 1963, is increasingly irritated at being excluded even from the second tier of EU candidates. Britain and France are keen on inviting it to the conference and making other gestures to assuage Ankara's growing anger, but Germany is not keen to give any encouragement to Turkey's European ambitions, and Greece has vowed to block the London conference unless the Turks give ground over Cyprus.

### CORRECTIONS

□ A photograph of Mr Geoff Haselhurst, former group financial director of Laura Ashley plc, was wrongly used to illustrate an article on the company in *The Times Magazine* (November 29). We apologise for the error.

□ The world's best selling copyright book is *The Guinness Book of Records* (report, November 29).



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Petite seized foiled

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Husband stabbed going to wife's aid

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# Petite jeweller seized gun and foiled gem raid

BY A CORRESPONDENT

A PETITE jeweller who stopped an armed robber in her tracks was commended for her "remarkable bravery" by an Old Bailey judge yesterday. Kelly Halliday, who is 5ft 2in, stopped David Brown from grabbing a £3,500 ring. Then she wrenched what she believed to be an automatic handgun from his grasp before he grabbed it back and fled down the street.

Judge Gerald Gordon gave Miss Halliday a £250 reward, which she said she would spend on a Christmas present for her three-year-old son. Judge Gordon ordered Brown, 20, to be detained in a young offenders' institution for 4½ years.

Jeremy Hardy, for the prosecution, said that Brown

struck at Bijou Jewellers in September 16 this year in East Sheen, southwest London, where Miss Halliday, 25, had been working on her own. He went in and asked to see the most expensive jewel-encrusted ring on display.

"She picked it out and showed it to him. He said: 'Give me the ring.' She noticed in his left hand what appeared to be an automatic handgun," said Mr Hardy.

Brown tried to snatch the display box, but "Miss Halliday, far from conceding the box and its contents, instead fought back, starting to grab the firearm from him and he grabbed it back. He ran out of the shop."

Brown gave himself up at Twickenham Police Station on

September 25. No weapon was ever recovered. Brown, of Mortlake, southwest London, admitted attempted robbery, and possessing a firearm or imitation with intent to commit an offence.

Passing sentence, Judge Gordon told him: "Working on her own in that shop was jeweller's assistant Kelly Halliday. Having got her to move the most expensive ring from the window display you pulled the gun on her and demanded the ring."

"With quite remarkable bravery and despite the gun she fought with you to prevent you taking her employer's property. She succeeded and you failed. You ran off home leaving her crying and almost hysterical, and no wonder."

Brown, who has previous convictions for offences including robbery, assault and criminal damage, had claimed that he needed cash to pay off his debts to a drug dealer. The judge responded: "That should be an object lesson to young people minded to experiment with drugs. People who work in local shops, be those jewellers, corner shops, sub-post offices or the like have got to be protected from the sort of devastating experience Kelly Halliday suffered, an experience that must affect people for life."

Judge Gordon said: "In my view Miss Halliday deserves to be commended for what I described as quite remarkable bravery, accurately described. Employers and insurers who have also saved a considerable sum may find ways of rewarding her."

After the case Miss Halliday, from Kingston-upon-Thames, southwest London, wearing a black trouser suit, said that she had gone to work the next day as usual. "I was a bit jumpy but it was OK. I was nervous for a little bit afterwards."

Her boyfriend, Adam Heraty, said that Miss Halliday was happy that the ordeal was over. "Obviously when it happened I was angry because she was very upset," he said.

## Mother praised for heavyweight justice

BY PAUL WILKINSON

A 16-STONE mother has received a police commendation after preventing the escape of a teenage thief. She tripped him up then sat on him.

Neighbours of Christine Brierley in Bailey, West Yorkshire, have nicknamed her "The Terminator". She said: "People thought it was hilarious. They could have called me worse. I don't think I'm brave enough."

Mrs Brierley, 45, a check-out supervisor, was naturally suspicious when the 17-year-old ran from a post office waving banknotes at three friends and shouting: "I've got it." She said: "I grabbed him. He was struggling so I whipped his legs from under him and sat on him."

"He started telling all the things he was going to do to me. I don't like being talked to like that so I tightened my grip. I knew it wasn't his money. I kept thinking it could be a pensioner's cash."

After she frogmarched the ten-stone youth back to the post office, police found that



Christine Brierley: "It wasn't his money"

he had been cashing a stolen £280 Giro cheque.

Her husband Peter, 47, said: "It's the kind of thing she would do without thinking. I'm proud of her."

The youth received a 12-month supervision order for burglary. Mrs Brierley, a mother of four, received a Good Citizen of the Month plaque from West Yorkshire Police. The assistant chief constable Norman Bettison said: "She acted in a brave and public-spirited manner."



Kelly Halliday leaving court yesterday. She was praised for her remarkable bravery

## Woman says sex bias cost her £200,000 job

BY EMMA WILKINS

A COMPUTER executive was sacked from her £200,000-a-year job while male colleagues who lost business were promoted, an industrial tribunal was told yesterday.

Caroline Olds, 34, who increased her basic salary of £20,000 by earning commission, was dismissed from her account manager's job at Computacentre in 1996 after nine years with the company. Ms Olds, who is now unemployed and seven months pregnant, won her case for unfair dismissal against the company — Britain's biggest computer supplier — at a tribunal hearing in August.

Ms Olds, who was born in South Africa and now lives in Wapping, East London, is now claiming sexual discrimination and is demanding £165,000 in allegedly unpaid commission. She was dismissed after her three biggest clients — Mercury Communications, Reader's Digest and Robert Fleming, the merchant bank — asked for her to be removed from their accounts. The tribunal was told.

But she claimed that her dismissal contrasted with the treatment of male colleagues, who were given senior management jobs or transferred to other accounts if they lost clients for the company. "I was dismissed but they were offered transfers or promotions. They were certainly allowed to keep their jobs," Ms Olds said.

Mike Norris, chief executive of Computacentre, admitted telling Ms Olds that saleswomen were "difficult" to manage. "My experience is that they were either very good indeed or no good. What we haven't seen is a mediocre performance," he told the tribunal at Croydon, South London.

"Caroline at her best was a fabulous account manager but her performance tailed off six to nine months before the end of her time with us. I think she'd just lost interest," he said. Ms Olds was

unsuitable for a senior management job because she did not "get on" with people and had "temper tantrums". "She had a very poor record in terms of her support to colleagues," Mr Norris said.

Ms Olds was also responsible for a series of "fruity" e-mail messages sent to colleagues and "was infamous for verbal abuse", he added.

When asked by John Warren, chairman of the tribunal, whether Computacentre took any steps to teach Ms Olds better skills or discipline, Mr Norris said: "We tolerated the situation rather than tried to rectify it which was a mistake, I admit."

Mr Norris said that Ms Olds had never shown any interest in a senior manage-



Olds says company owes her £165,000

ment role. "On many occasions Caroline made it clear to me she was only interested in increasing her own earnings. Not once did she approach me to ask about management positions," Mr Norris said.

But Ms Olds, who is representing herself, claimed she had telephoned Mr Norris on his mobile phone one evening before her dismissal to say she was prepared to leave London to become a regional branch manager.

Computacentre currently employs a female manager who is responsible for 15 junior managers in London but Mr Norris acknowledged she was promoted only after Ms Olds was dismissed. The hearing was adjourned to next June.

## Husband stabbed going to wife's aid

BY SIMON DE BRUXELLES

A MAN who tried to protect his wife from two robbers was in intensive care last night after being stabbed at least five times.

David Hurd, a 40-year-old builder, had gone to collect his wife, Susan, from the shop where she works when he interrupted the robbery. He saw the hooded men club his wife and slash her hands when she hesitated to open the till in the shop attached to a sub-post office at South Twerton, near Bath.

The robbers stabbed Mr Hurd three times in the head, twice in the chest and slashed his face, leaving him lying unconscious in a pool of blood. Last night his condition was described as serious but stable.

The raiders escaped in a stolen car that was later found abandoned. Mr Hurd was taken to the Royal United Hospital in Bath where he underwent emergency surgery.

The sub-postmaster and a customer were hurt, but not seriously. The Post Office offered a "substantial" reward for information leading to conviction of the attackers. It was not yet known how much they took.

An 18-year-old man arrested later on Wednesday night at another incident in Bath was being questioned about the robbery.

## Grand National owner attacked and robbed

BY STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

THE owner of this year's Grand National winner and his wife have been attacked and robbed in their home.

Police said yesterday that Stan Clarke, 64, a millionaire property owner and chairman of two racecourse companies, was cut on the cheek during the raid on Wednesday night at his home in Barton-under-Needwood, Staffordshire. The gang stole £300 and jewellery which was still being valued yesterday. They did not take the Martell Grand National Trophy, won by his horse Lord Cyllene in April.

Detectives are liaising with other forces to see if there are links to similar burglaries at

the homes of wealthy victims over the past three years.

The attacks have been linked to criminals in the North West nicknamed the Quality Street Gang, but police believe a number of different burglary teams have been at work.

In the latest robbery, the masked burglars burst into the Clarke home through an unlocked conservatory door. They had a baseball bat, a knife and a screwdriver with which they threatened Mr Clarke and his wife, Hilda.

The couple were pinned to floor and then handcuffed together as the men began ransacking the house. The

couple were told they would be attacked if they set off the alarm.

After they left Mr Clarke managed to dial emergency services using his chin. He said yesterday: "I just left the conservatory door unlocked for a couple of minutes and they were in. They just walked in. Believe me they won't be able to do that again. It was a very nasty experience and something I never want to go through again in all my life."

He said: "They slashed my face and Hilda and I are both bruised. It was an awful experience and Hilda is very, very shocked. Thankfully we are now both all right although Hilda is very upset."

John Raybould, the Clarks' chauffeur, said: "They're both strong characters, but they've been through the most frightening ordeal of their lives. 'We're always wary of this sort of thing happening, because it is an attractive property and they are both well known people. But you still never think it will happen. They have lived in the village for 24 years and never had any problems before. They just want a bit of peace and quiet now and a bit of time to get over this with their family and friends.'"

Acting Detective Inspector Steve Burton said the gang might have staked out the property for some time and police were seeking witnesses who might have seen them as they watched or made their getaway.



Mr and Mrs Clarke with some of their trophies

## Lottery winner 'turned to drugs'

BY PAUL WILKINSON

A LOTTERY winner said he turned to drugs to cope with the pressures of becoming an overnight multi-millionaire, a court heard yesterday. The stresses led to Colin Sampson's wife walking out on him and his two young children having to move schools.

Sampson, 39, was targeted by police who arrived at his luxury home in Sheffield looking for cocaine but found only a small quantity of cannabis. The former plasterer, whose life was transformed in October last year when he and

his wife Deana, 37, won £5.4 million, pleaded guilty to possessing and cultivating cannabis. Police found a cannabis bush in his kitchen which had a value of £45, and cannabis resin worth £600.

Magistrates in Sheffield gave him a two-year conditional discharge and two weeks to pay £50 costs.

George Tierney, Sampson's lawyer told the court: "Had he not had all the trappings of wealth, I believe the press and the police would not have chased him to this extent."

He said Sampson, who had previous cautions for possessing cannabis, had

resorted again to using the drug and cultivating it because of the strains since he won the Lottery. "He threw the bush to one side, went on holiday for a few weeks, and when he came back, the bush had prospered. There was no intention to supply. The cannabis was bought in bulk for his own use."

"If he still lived on the Stradbroke council estate, like any ordinary family with 24 children, he would not have received the same media attention that he has today. His life has been made hell. He cannot do anything without attracting press attention."

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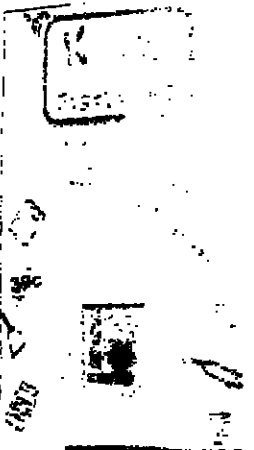
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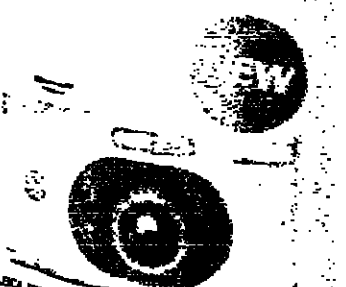
The adoption of...  
has caused...

## All-women finds father!

By David...

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# Foster girl toy hurtful to children, say charities

By MARK HENDERSON

FOSTERING and adoption agencies yesterday called for a ban on the sale of the latest cyberpet toy to reach Britain from Japan. It features a virtual foster child who has to be fed and educated before she can be put up for adoption.

Kimiko the Fostering is a human version of the popular Tamagotchi and has been selling well in toyshops ahead of Christmas. However, some importers have stopped distributing it because of complaints that it is insulting to foster children.

The wristwatch-sized toy has a digital image of a little girl, Kimiko, who has been abandoned by her parents and has to be nurtured by foster carers. She must be fed, bathed and put to bed at night; her "foster parent" must play with her to keep her amused and educate her.

Kimiko must also be disciplined from time to time to stop her being naughty. If standards of care slip, she will run away. The object is to increase Kimiko's IQ so that she can be successfully adopted by new parents.

Adoption and foster care groups said the toy was upsetting foster children who saw friends playing with it; it also perpetuated damaging myths

about fostering. "We are appalled by this product and have asked importers to cease distribution immediately," Felicity Collier, director of the British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering, said. "Children and carers have told us that they find it deeply upsetting."

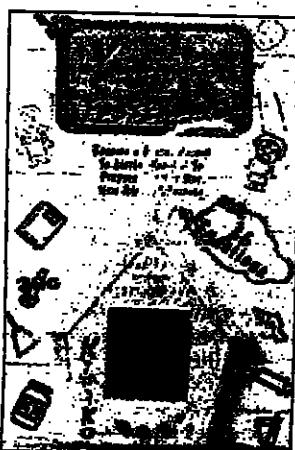
The misleading messages this game gives about being in foster care are most insensitive and could actually be harmful to children who may already have experienced some sadness. She said dozens of children and foster parents had complained to the charity about the game.

Derek Warren of the National Foster Care Association said the toys treated foster children as a commodity. "The game can only be negative for children and young people in foster care," he said. "They are already stigmatised by virtue of being in care, and this just adds to their problems and the way they are generally held in low esteem."

The association has complained to the Advertising Standards Authority about publicity for the toys released by the World Stock Corporation in Birmingham. Kimiko was billed as a child "deserted at birth, needs raising and millions want to do just that". The toy was advertised as one of a number of "virtual pets". It retails at £6.95.

The World Stock Corporation has no plans to order further supplies. "We did not realise the sensitivity of the product when we first ordered it," a spokesman said. Other importers have also stopped distributing the toy because of concerns about good taste.

John Lewis said it would reconsider the sale of the toys in light of the charities' concerns. "We will be reviewing whether or not to take further deliveries as part of our normal assessment process," a spokesman said. "We had no intention of causing offence or distress."



The adoption game that has caused offence

## All-women school finds fatherly touch

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

A PRIMARY school whose 37 staff are all female has brought in seven fathers and a grandfather to provide masculine role models. The head feared that literacy skills among boys were suffering because they regarded reading as "girly".

Copnor Infant School in Portsmouth, Hampshire, has not had a male teacher for ten years, apart from trainees. Men account for 17 per cent of teachers nationally for the under-eights, and the Teacher Training Agency forecasts that they will disappear from primary schools by 2010 if the decline continues.

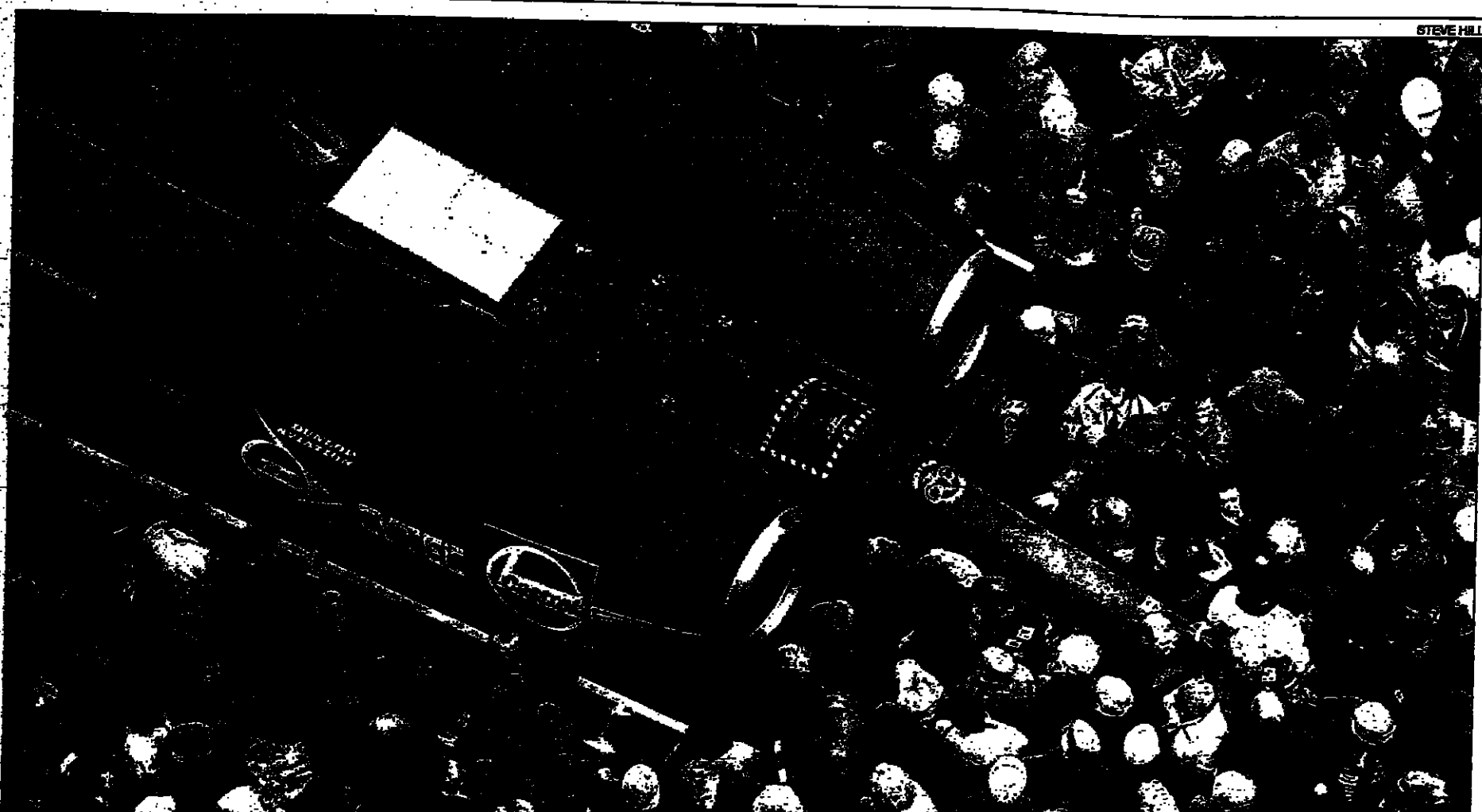
Sylvia Fletcher, the head, said: "Boys weren't achieving as well as girls. I thought the best way to redress the balance was to send a letter home explaining the situation to

dads. We now have seven or eight coming in every week. We started out with men listening to boys read. Now they listen to boys and girls."

The volunteers attend for a couple of hours a week. Steve Legge, 36, a naval petty officer, has five-year-old twin daughters, Josie and Kirsty, at the school.

He said: "It has been quite rewarding. Some of the children weren't very good at all when we started, but their confidence has improved. There are some jokes about me being in an all-female school, but I know this work is really important."

The 37 staff include 11 classroom teachers, nine assistants, two administration staff, 10 dinner ladies, two cleaners, two special needs workers, and the head.



Slow progress: Richard Noble's Thrust, which in September broke the world land speed record in Nevada, being greeted by crowds yesterday on its way to the Coventry Motor Museum



## 12 DAYS JUST AREN'T ENOUGH AT CHRISTMAS

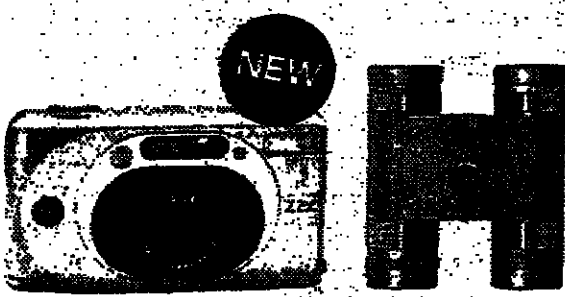
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## The great new comic

**By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT**

## Double-b to use se

**"SECOND-RATE"** barristers are being instructed to prosecute for the Crown Prosecution Service because of the huge number of briefs sent back at the last minute as a result of double-booking.

A National Audit Office report published today says that a study at nine court centres of 433 cases at which briefs were returned in three quarters of cases. In almost a third of them, the substitute counsel appointed was "judged to have been of inappropriate

A further re-examination of the Bar's virtual monopoly of Crown Court work (solicitor advocates have taken only a tiny share) would be welcomed by the CPS and the Law Society. Dame Barbara Mills, QC, the Director of Public Prosecutions, said: "I have always said I would like full rights of audi-

But the move could mean a big loss of work by the Bar, which is already worried by proposals to remove most civil legal aid and bring in "no win, no fee" work. Robert Owen, QC, Bar chairman, said: "The Bar is strongly against having

The previous Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay of Chalfont, and four judges backed down this year over letting CPS lawyers appear in Crown Court trials on their own. They also said lawyers working for the CPS, or employed in commerce, industry and government, could not handle substantive High Court civil actions without a private practice lawyer. The Law Society had called for Crown Court advocacy rights on behalf of solicitors representing the CPS.

Solicitors in private practice may qualify as higher-court advocates and appear in Crown Court trials if they meet stringent requirements.

□ The first woman chairman of the Bar, who is to take up the post on January 1, has dismissed the Lord Chancellor's attacks on barristers' "fat fees". Heather Hallett, QC, told the Bar Council in her inaugural speech last night: "For the vast majority of the Bar doing publicly funded work, the idea of a fat fee is as much a dream as winning the lottery. We are well aware that no one owes us a living."

**BY OUR LEGAL CORRESPONDENT**

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A National Audit Office report published today says that a study at nine court centres of 433 cases found that briefs were returned in three quarters of cases. In almost a third of them, the substitute counsel appointed was "judged to have been of inappropriate

quality", the report says. Returned briefs waste resources and can have an adverse impact on the handling of cases, the office says. "Double-booking" occurs when a trial barristers are involved with lasts longer than expected and another counsel has to be instructed. The problem is exacerbated by the inability of courts always to set definite trial dates.

The report says: "This can be time-consuming for CPS staff and may have an adverse

effect on the timeliness and standard of preparation and there may be few counsel of suitable quality available at short notice, particularly if a brief is returned just before the trial."

David Calvert-Smith, QC, vice-chairman of the Criminal Bar Association, said the Bar took the problem of returned briefs very seriously and was taking steps to enforce the new service standard introduced in November last year it had agreed with the CPS.



The artist Michael Landy, 34, sits by his Tate Gallery Christmas display after it was wheeled into place yesterday. His creation includes a damaged Teletubbies doll, empty supermarket bags, bits of broken Christmas tree, drink cans and a pizza box

## BY ADAM FRESCO

**LORD CHADLINGTON**, the former chairman of the Royal Opera House, yesterday hit back at the "insulting and hysterical" Commons committee report which preceded his resignation.

He accused the Culture Select Committee of a "gross abuse" of its privileges for attacking "on the flimsiest of evidence" and "immature" public-spirited people who "gave their time and money in the opera house cause."

The committee, chaired by the Labour MP Gerald Kaufman, had said: "We would prefer to see the House run by a Philistine with the requisite financial acumen than by the sort of dilettante and dilettante-lovers who have brought a great and valuable institution to its knees."

Lord Chadlington, writing in *The Spectator* magazine, said: "The language in which the committee's report is writ-

ten - or which Mr Kaufman seems so proud - is insulting in the extreme. To attack the integrity of public-spirited men and women, many of whom give freely of their time and lavishly of their money, on the flimsiest of evidence and innuendo is gross abuse of privilege."

He said that he had initiated change in financial controls, management information and corporate governance. But he said that Mr Kaufman, nonetheless, would be welcome in the new Royal Opera House when redevelopment was complete.

However, his enjoyment "will have been possible more through the efforts of those who work at the Royal Opera House, those who support it and those who love it than the hysterical hyperbole of your select committee's report."

**Letters, page 23.**

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# Professor advises against beef or lamb for children

By MICHAEL HORNSBY  
AGRICULTURE  
CORRESPONDENT

A DISTINGUISHED scientist advised parents yesterday to encourage young children to eat chicken rather than beef or lamb because of the risks posed by "mad cow" disease.

Professor Colin Blakemore, head of physiology at Oxford University and president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, spoke as farmers were offered a glimmer of hope of faster progress towards easing the ban on beef exports. The European Commission said it was bringing forward talks on a proposal that could lift the ban in Northern Ireland, the region least affected by BSE.

The professor said that he had stopped eating beef more than ten years ago, and had now given up lamb as well. "About a month ago, I decided I was not going to eat lamb because I felt there was sufficient evidence that BSE might

But farmers are given a fresh glimmer of hope on an end to European Union ban on exports

have passed into sheep. However small the risk, I did not like the taste of lamb enough to feel it was worth taking." His own grown-up children had ignored his advice not to eat beef, but he added: "If I had a baby now, I would certainly not be feeding it lamb or beef."

The fatalities from the variant of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease linked to BSE might be just the beginning, he said. "The missing element is any certainty about the incubation

period. If thousands are dying in five or ten years' time, which I hope will not be the case, the ban on beef on the bone will look very prudent."

Earlier this week, a scientific advisory committee in Brussels suggested that most cuts of lamb over six months old should be banned in "high-risk" countries such as Britain. The Government's Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee is to consider whether there should be tougher controls, but is not expected to change its advice.

On Radio 4's *World at One*, Jack Cunningham, the Agriculture Minister, said: "There is no question of lamb chops, leg or rack of lamb, being off the agenda. They will continue to be available as now."

Jeff Almond, a microbiologist at Reading University and a member of the advisory committee, said: "I do not want to pre-empt our discussions, but we have been through all this before. The Brussels committee had no data we did not have."

On the committee's advice, the Government has already banned consumption of sheep brain, and from January 1 the spinal cord must be removed at abattoirs on animals over 12 months old. Lamb comes from younger animals.

Professor Almond still eats beef and lamb, and said the risk in sheep was entirely theoretical: "Are you going to knacker an entire industry on the strength of an entirely conjectural risk?"

In Brussels, Emma Bonino, the Commissioner for Consumer Health, disclosed the chance of partially lifting the beef ban in talks with Ben Gill, deputy president of the National Farmers' Union. Discussion of a "certified herd scheme" had been scheduled for mid-January, but will now take place next Tuesday.

Under the scheme, beef could be exported from herds certified as uninfected. Northern Ireland has a computerised system for tracing cattle movements and health history. The mainland is not expected to have this until next summer.



Feeling sheepish: Barry Greenwood, a textile technologist, up to his neck in fleece soon to become a jumper; below, Dolly, the first cloned sheep

## Designers fashion a Dolly spin-off

SCIENTISTS are about to create the ultimate spin-off from the world's first cloned sheep. Technologists at Leeds University's School of Textile Industries, responsible for transforming Dolly's 2.5kg of high-quality fleece into wool, have already cleaned the coat before it is dyed and spun ready for knitting into a woolly jumper.

The fleece from the first shearing of the 17-month-old Finn Dorset breed, cloned from an adult cell, was auctioned by the

Cystic Fibrosis Trust earlier this year to highlight the life-threatening genetic disease. The charity devised a competition, launched on BBC's *The Clothes Show*, to design a jumper using Dolly's wool. The winner will be announced in February and, after being modelled, the jumper will go on permanent display at the Science Museum in London.

Barry Greenwood, a textile technologist at Leeds University, said: "The fleece will produce a very good fine-to-medium

wool, suitable for carpet or heavyweight knitwear." He said fleece from cloned sheep could produce a consistent quality of wool. "Manufacturers would know exactly what they were buying if they were uniform fleeces, rather like the way synthetic fibres can be controlled."

The fleece was solvent-scoured and will be carded — a process to open the tufts to create a coarse yarn — before being dyed and spun. The winning design will be knitted at the university.

## Healthy alternative carries its own risks

By ROBIN YOUNG

CHICKEN offers considerable health advantages as a meat relatively low in saturated fatty acids, but it is also the most common cause of food poisoning.

All poultry is a good source of protein, vitamins, and minerals such as iron, zinc, phosphorus and potassium. The protein is required to build and repair body tissue, and the B vitamins which poultry provides are required for a healthy nervous system.

Chicken and turkey liver are excellent sources of vitamin A, which is needed for healthy skin and resistance to infection. Most of the fat in poultry is unsaturated and so will not raise blood cholesterol levels. Although duck and geese are relatively lean, and most of their fat is contained in the skin, which can be easily

removed. Skinless chicken and turkey breasts contain only about 5 per cent fat.

Duck provides twice as much thiamin and riboflavin as chicken, and has three times as much iron, while a typical serving of goose provides three times as much riboflavin as chicken and almost twice the amount of vitamin B12. 100 grams of goose contains one third of the daily required amount of iron for women, and more than half that needed by men.

Poultry is a high-risk source of salmonella and campylobacter bacteria. Chicken or turkey should never be eaten if the meat appears pink or bloody, and hands should always be thoroughly washed after handling raw poultry. Salmonella survives freezing, but is destroyed by thorough cooking.

## 'Alarmist' politicians blamed for BSE crisis

A coroner has spoken out after a farmer with money worries shot himself. Michael Hornsby reports

A CORONER has blamed "alarmist politicians" for contributing to the crisis in the beef industry. Dewi Pritchard-Jones was speaking after hearing evidence that a farmer had killed himself because of financial worries.

Mr Pritchard-Jones also said he would willingly buy any beef on the bone if a farmer or butcher set up a black market in such cuts of meat, which are due to be banned from next Tuesday.

Glyn Pritchard, 45, who farmed near Bangor in Caernarfonshire, was found dead on September 27. He was lying on an embankment near a road with a 12-bore shotgun

between his legs and wounds in his neck.

Nesta Pritchard told the inquest in Caernarfon that she was aware her husband had been under financial pressure, but did not realise he was suffering from depression. She said: "He always kept himself busy, threw himself into his work and, perhaps, hid his depression. There were many things worrying him associated with farming and pressure on us from outside."

He added: "I consider the recent comments and actions of politicians to be completely unwarranted and I hope that those actions will not result in further deaths in the manner that Mr Pritchard died."

Mr Pritchard-Jones appeared to be referring to the ban on beef on the bone announced by Jack Cunningham, the Agriculture Minister, last week because of a remote risk that it might be infected with "mad cow" disease.

The coroner recorded a verdict of suicide at the inquest on Wednesday, saying he could not imagine Mr Pritchard firing the gun in the way he did if it was not his intention to kill himself.

Letters Mr Pritchard had received were inside his shirt. The coroner said: "I do not propose to go through them in detail, except to comment that he was under commercial pressure."

He told Mrs Pritchard: "I am sorry I had to drag you into the political sphere at the end, but I feel somebody ought to say it."

Farmers have a suicide rate one and a half times the national average. However, only one suicide has been specifically linked to the BSE crisis. That was a Yorkshire beef farmer, William Rodney, who shot himself in May 1996, after taking cattle to market and being told that he would only get half the price for them he had been expecting. He was also facing tax demands.



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Former Parachute Regiment members in Whitehall condemning Mr Adams's visit

## Adams greeted by jeers, cheers and soldier's mother

BY MARTIN FLETCHER  
CHIEF IRELAND  
CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR gave Gerry Adams not only an hour at Downing Street yesterday but also a propaganda coup that Sinn Féin has rarely enjoyed before.

The sight of Mr Adams and his colleagues entering No 10's black front door was just part of it. From dawn to dusk, "Gerry and his peace-makers", as they were dubbed by the media, plugged their republican cause in interviews with reporters from Toronto to Tokyo and all points between.

Mr Adams was talking on his mobile phone as his red Toyota Previa led a four-vehicle motorcade away from his Kensington hotel shortly after 8am. He was talking to Radio 4's *Today* as he drove past Harvey Nichols. From 9am to 10am he was on Nicky Campbell's Radio Five Live call-in show.

With the notable exception of the calls from Northern Ireland, his exchanges with a British public familiar with IRA atrocities were remarkably cordial. One call was from Colin Parry, whose young son died in the IRA's Warrington bomb of 1993. The two men had a civil conversation, with Mr Adams hoping that other families would not have to suffer as his had done.



Rita Restorick with the card showing her son

Mr Adams's stock answers to more aggressive questioners were: "We have the opportunity to put all this behind us... It's no good being a nay-sayer... Let's go forward, let's be positive."

Yes, he would favour a South African-style truth and reconciliation commission. Yes, he had once claimed British unemployment benefit but no, he did not have a British passport, nor did he watch *EastEnders* or the Spice Girls.

From Broadcasting House it was on to Bookmarks, a socialist bookshop in Bloomsbury Street. Mr Adams delegated the interviewee's role to his colleague, Martin

McGuinness, while he signed paperback copies of his latest book, *An Irish Voice: The Quest for Peace*.

Mr Adams slipped down to the Thames Embankment to collect his thoughts before the Great Encounter. In Downing Street, photographers and television crews had been gathering since early morning. There were enough aluminium ladders for a decorators' convention.

In Whitehall, a large crowd of republicans waving tricolours faced an equally large crowd of National Front supporters waving Union flags and cursing the IRA. The "Shinners" arrived at 1.42pm and were greeted by jeers and cheers in equal measure and the occasional cry of "murderers". They walked up Downing Street, to be met by Rita Restorick, mother of the last British soldier killed in Northern Ireland, who had been admitted by officials from No 10.

She handed Mr Adams a Christmas card bearing a picture of a dove and a photo of her son, Stephen. She said that she favoured the meeting but wanted to make sure the publicity was balanced.

The door of No 10 opened to admit the political representatives of the IRA into the heart of the British Establishment. Eighty minutes later they emerged for another lengthy press conference. After that it was off to Millbank for yet more interviews before catching the 9.20pm flight home from Heathrow.

After the No 10 meeting, Gerry Adams ignored a question in English from a British journalist and answered in Irish a question posed in Irish. He learnt the language in the Maze prison but does not have the fluency of a native speaker.

The language is fluently spoken by 4 per cent of the 3.6 million people in Ireland. Banned by 17th century British colonialists, Irish is undergoing a revival and its nationalist connotations have faded.

Leading article, page 23



From left: Martin Ferris, Martin McGuinness, Gerry Adams, Lucilia Bhreatnach and Siobhan O'Hanlon

## Shadow of IRA hangs over No 10

BY MARTIN FLETCHER

FOUR of the seven-member Sinn Féin delegation that visited Downing Street yesterday have IRA convictions, and three have been named as members of the terrorists' ruling army council.

Gerry Adams, 49, is Sinn Féin's president and MP for West Belfast. Despite his denials, security sources believe he is a former commander of the IRA's Belfast battalion and now first among equals on the army council. He has been interned, but never convicted of a terrorist offence.

Martin McGuinness, 47, is MP for

Mid-Ulster and Sinn Féin's chief negotiator at the Stormont peace talks. He was twice convicted for IRA membership in the Irish Republic and was active during the Troubles. He, too, is believed to be on the army council, although he denies it.

Martin Ferris, from Co Kerry, is also said to be a member of the seven-man army council and is a member of Sinn Féin's national executive. He was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment in 1984 for seeking to smuggle seven tons of weapons into Ireland from America on the trawler *Marita Ann*. His presence on the delegation was evidently designed to reassure republican hardliners sceptical

of the peace process. Siobhan O'Hanlon, another member of Sinn Féin's national executive, was jailed for seven years in 1983 for possessing explosives. She is the niece of Joe Cahill, the grand old man of Irish republicanism.

Richard McAuley, Gerry Adams's 44-year-old press officer, was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment in 1974 for planting a bomb in Belfast.

Lucilia Bhreatnach, Sinn Féin's general secretary, is a member of a prominent republican family from Dublin. Michelle Gildernew, the seventh member of the delegation, heads Sinn Féin's British desk.

## Inquiry into escape of Maze killer

By AUREY MAGILL  
IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

MO MOWLAM has ordered an inquiry after a convicted IRA killer escaped from the Maze prison dressed as a woman.

The Northern Ireland Secretary said the escape was an appalling lapse of security. "I want to find out what happened and make sure it doesn't happen again," she said yesterday.

Police on both sides of the border are searching for Liam Averill, 32, who was sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of two Protestants shortly before the IRA announced its 1994 ceasefire. He was smuggled out of prison with a group of women and children attending a Christmas party on Wednesday.

Averill, who is not married and has no children, was one of 148 prisoners attending the party in the prison gym. The event is normally for prisoners' partners and children but Averill's sister and children were allowed to attend.

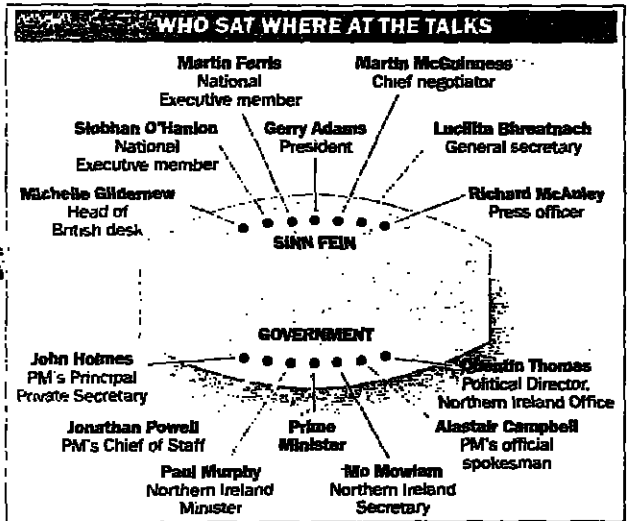
According to prison sources, he dressed up in women's clothing, believed to have been smuggled into the prison the previous day. He left in the prison bus with the women and children in the early evening. The bus dropped him outside in the car park.

Prison officials were totally unaware of the escape until Padraic Wilson, the IRA commanding officer of Republican prisoners, told a prison warden to check the number of prisoners.

Averill was found guilty in 1994 of murdering two men: Alan Smith, a 40-year-old UDR soldier, and John McCloy, 38, in Garvagh, Co Londonderry. Frances Smith, the dead soldier's mother, yesterday said that Averill "should never be allowed to see daylight again".



Averill: killed two Protestants in 1994



Christmas Day

25  
December

"Thanks ever so much for the jumper..."

Boxing Day

26  
December

"No, really, I do like it, honest..."

New Year's Day

1

January

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# Garden created from dump must be ploughed up

THE retired couple who spent almost £10,000 and eight years turning a rubbish tip into a garden have lost their year-long fight against a council ban. They have been told to plough the site up because it does not have planning permission.

In 1989, Martin and Pauline Leadley paid a farmer £8,000 for an acre of green belt behind their home in the village of Cropwell Butler, Nottinghamshire. It was being used as a dump and they took up the back-breaking challenge of shifting the rusting bikes, cookers, car parts, tyres and mattresses before starting their garden.

Last year Rushcliffe Borough Council said the couple had broken planning laws and would have to return the site to its original state. After protests, the council has decided that the garden must be replaced by 90 trees, planted at the Leadleys' expense by next March.

Mrs Leadley, 68, said: "It was just an awkward corner of the field as far as the farmer was concerned. Now all that work will go to waste. It's been very stressful and caused a lot of sleepless nights. In a way, I'm glad it's over, but we're both very disappointed it's ended this way."

The only alternative was to fight the council in the courts

**A retired couple's eight-year project will be sacrificed to planning laws, reports Adam Fresco**

on an appeal, but we've spoken to people who have taken similar action and we've learnt that that could take up to five years and cost thousands of pounds. We are both coming up to 70 years of age and we certainly don't feel like a five-year fight. We have already found the last year stressful enough.

"It's been very difficult because we are keen gardeners and half the enjoyment of gardening is in the anticipation. Every seed you sow, you think, 'I wonder whether I'll actually see a flower grow?' Now we know that won't happen. All the flowers in the garden will have to go."

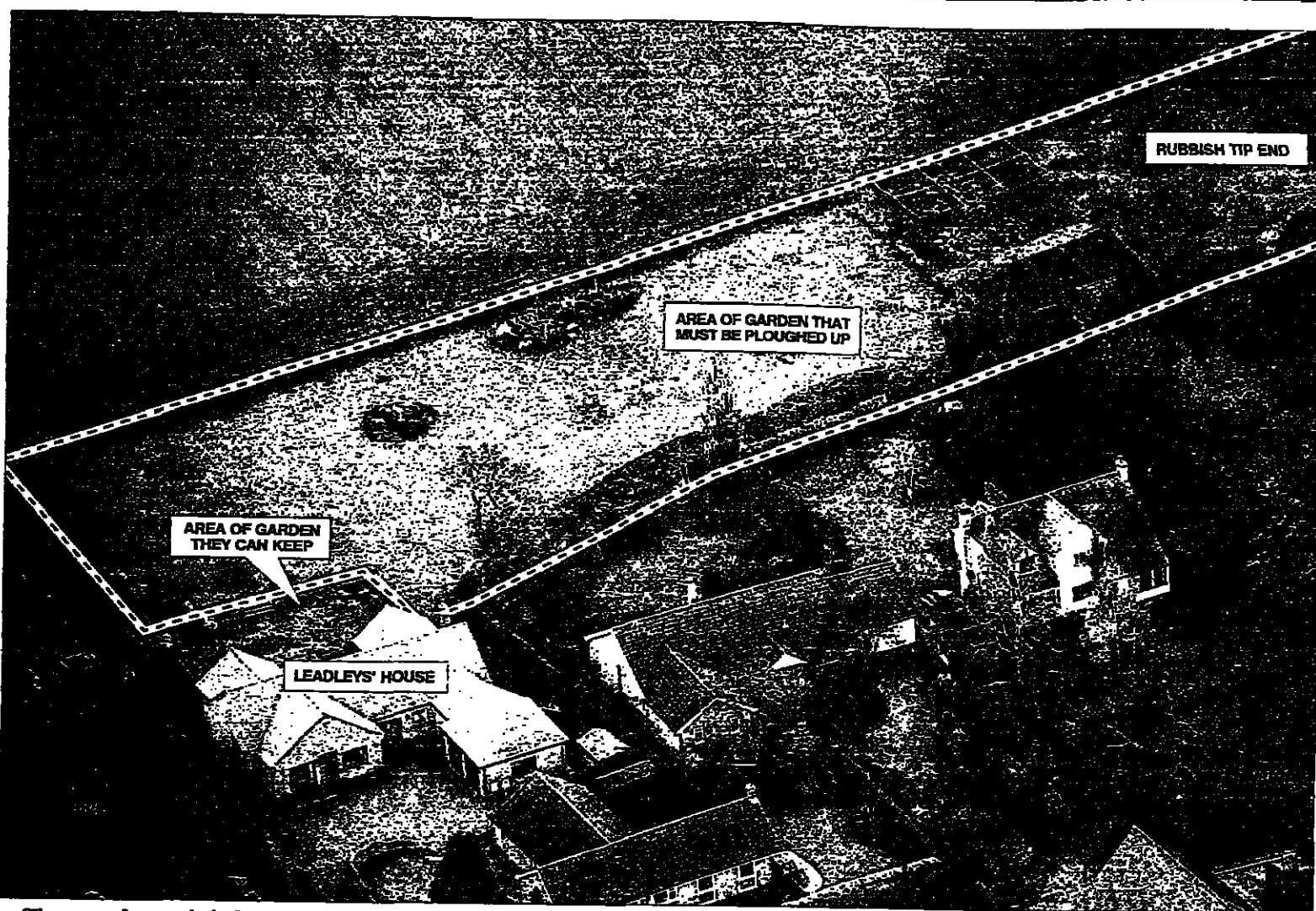
When the couple bought the land, it never occurred to them that they would need planning permission. Gardens are considered to be part of residential development and subject

to planning restrictions if they are within a green belt.

The Leadleys will have to spend more than £1,000 planting the trees. Mrs Leadley said: "The council have said they will be monitoring our work, so we've still got Big Brother watching over us. I feel very sad we've lost the garden."

Jim Collinson, the borough's assistant director of planning, said: "The council has been far from bureaucratic about this. We've been flexible, carried out negotiations and reached an agreement with the Leadleys. There were many options open to them — they could have grazed sheep on the land."

"They will have to pay for the work and carry it out since they have built something without getting permission first. The remedy is in their hands. It was a very important principle which has been resolved in a flexible and sensitive way."



The acre of green belt that the Leadleys bought for £8,000. "It was just an awkward corner of the field as far as the farmer was concerned"



Martin and Pauline Leadley: flowers will have to go

## Student jumped to death in essay panic

BY ADAM FRESCO

A STUDENT jumped to his death after two weeks at Cambridge University, because he panicked about being unable to finish an essay on time, an inquest was told yesterday.

Jack Davies, 18, a language student at Queens' College, had already missed two other deadlines. After a night out with friends when he appeared to be in a good mood, he returned to his room to try to finish his work. His body was found at the bottom of the four-storey building.

Nat Cary, a Home Office pathologist, told the inquest in Cambridge that two small knife wounds had been found on the student's body, one on his lower chest and one on his left wrist. A small kitchen knife was in his room.

Mr Davies had A-grade A levels in English, Music and French. The Coroner, John Smith, said: "I think there is no doubt whatsoever that Jack did go to the roof and clambered over the parapet."

"He did appear to have an essay to finish. There was extreme concern on his part that he didn't want to be late, because he had missed a couple of deadlines."

"He did intend to finish this essay. I think he became more and more apprehensive about it. This is one of those cases where his anxiety grew into a feeling of panic. I think it was probably under those sort of circumstances that he went to the roof and what happened, happened."

Mr Smith recorded an open verdict, saying it was clear that the teenager was responsible for his own death, but that there was not sufficient evidence for him to record a suicide verdict.

After the hearing, the student's mother, Ann Davies, of Nutley, East Sussex, said that her son appeared to have no problems after beginning college. She said: "He was very excited about going there. He found it frantic, but fun. He was a very talented, bright young man, very gifted and very academic. He had a great sense of humour and lots of friends."

Cambridge University has its own counselling service, set up 28 years ago. It helps an average of 140 students a week.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Police to mark cards for thieves

Police at Holbeck, Leeds, are delivering Christmas cards with a warning message to burglars suspected of plaguing households with break-ins last December. On the card is a robin and star with the words "Season's Greetings", but inside is the pledge that "Holbeck police will be actively targeting known burglars this Christmas" and telephone numbers for the CID office and Crimestoppers. Suspects will also be given a verbal warning when the cards are delivered.

### TV licence up £6

The cost of a television licence is to rise by £6 in the biggest increase for more than a decade, the Government has announced. From next April the cost of a colour licence will increase from £91.50 to £97.50, and a black and white licence from £30.50 to £32.50.

### Prisons post

Pauline Clare, the Chief Constable of Lancashire, is to join the Prisons Board as an adviser to Richard Tilt, Director-General of the Prison Service. She will be one of four non-executive directors of the board and will take up her post in January.

### Surprise buy

Surplus boxes of clementine oranges bought at Dover docks were found contain cannabis worth £40,000. The buyer, Tim Hayes, of Worldwide Fruit in Folkestone, called Customs and Excise. He said: "It brightened up an otherwise dull market day."

### Suitably Bond

A tuxedo-style suit worn by Sean Connery in the James Bond film *Diamonds are Forever* sold for £9,775 at Christie's in London yesterday. The last of 19 items of Bond memorabilia was bought by Michael Eisenburg, 33, an American.

### Shell-shocked

Toddles the tortoise survived a bin lorry's rubbish crusher after been thrown out with the garden and household waste. The tortoise was found at the dump and returned to John Mullen, 57, of Portchester, Hampshire, who has owned it since he was 11.

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# Tories warm to plan for party democracy

PLAN to throw Tory leadership elections open to a straight vote of the members with no special role for MPs in the final decision is gaining ground in the parliamentary party.

The proposal is being backed by a growing number of new Tory MPs and frontbenchers, and privately by several members of the Shadow Cabinet. They assert that it would make the Tories one of the most democratic parties in western Europe, and far more so than the modernised Labour Party.

At present MPs are the only people with a vote in the party leadership election. Under the new plan they would retain the right to prompt a leadership election, and they would choose a shortlist of two or three candidates. But thereafter their special role would end. They would have just one vote — as party members not as MPs — and it would carry the same weight as that of the hundreds of thousands of ordinary members.

There would be no need for a complicated electoral college to determine the election. The membership would decide in a ballot. The one member, one vote (OMOV) idea has grown more attractive to MPs as a behind-the-scenes struggle has erupted between the Tory Old Guard and the new intake over increasing the say for ordinary members in leadership elections.

The Young Turks are pushing for members to have at

MPs are being urged to outstrip Labour with leadership election changes. Philip Webster reports

least 35 per cent of the vote in an electoral college, with the MPs restricted to 60 per cent. The Old Guard want the figure for members restricted to 25 per cent at most, and a handful, including the former Cabinet minister Douglas Hogg, want to resist pressure for a bigger role for activists. The OMOV plan could be seen as a compromise because it would still give MPs the key say on who went forward for election; this would be designed to meet the argument of those who argue that greater membership democracy



Horam: delighted by growth in support

risks the parliamentary party having foisted on it a candidate in whom it might have no confidence.

By appearing on the shortlist all the candidates would clearly have respectable backing among MPs. But there would be nothing to stop the party in the country choosing the candidate who might have been second or third on the MPs' list. Under virtually all the electoral college options the parliamentary party would have the right to prompt elections and nominate candidates. The OMOV plan is backed by several frontbenchers and former ministers, including John Horam, the Treasury spokesman Tim Boswell, Robert Jackson and Richard Onaway.

The new members who have voiced support for it include James Gray, Andrew Lansley, Keith Simpson, Teresa May and Howard Flight. William Hague, who favours a big increase in party democracy, is reported by colleagues to view the idea with interest, and some of his closest allies in the Shadow Cabinet and on the front bench believe it would be a radical advance in modernising the party.

Tory pro-reform campaign-

ers are likely to argue that the plan would still leave too much power in the hands of MPs because of their sole right to nominate. However, some privately admit that a 100 per cent OMOV system for the election itself would be a huge advance for party democracy on a system in which until now the MPs have held all the cards. At present the option of an electoral college with a 35-40 per cent vote for members remains the most likely outcome of the debate among MPs that will end next week.

Mr Horam said yesterday that it was "not yet a majority view" but that he had been delighted by the growth in support for the proposal. "In my view it would send an electric current through British politics," he said. "We would overtake Labour in terms of party democracy and the prospect of fuller participation would help us attract younger members."

The plan, however, would be more than many some senior members of the 1922 Committee see stomach. Sir Archibald Hamilton, the chairman, has repeatedly made clear that MPs must have the dominant role.

He said last week: "We don't want to overreach ourselves so that we end up with a leader of the party who does not command the support of the majority of the parliamentary party. The higher the percentage that goes to the outside, the more likely that will happen."



Television chef Jennifer Paterson being greeted by Cherie Blair at this week's Downing Street "general reception"

By POLLY NEWTON

WHEN is a party not a party? When it is held at the taxpayer's expense, it seems.

It was a subject exercising the minds of Whitehall press officers yesterday after it was disclosed that eight government departments spent a total £7.4 million on "official hospitality" in the five months after Labour came to power.

The figures, supplied by ministers in response to written questions from the Liberal Democrat Treasury spokesman, Malcolm Bruce, were released on Wednesday evening as Tony Blair welcomed celebrity guests such as the actor John Thaw, the disc jockeys Chris Evans and Zoe

## Whitehall rejects the party line as bill tops £7m

Ball, and Jennifer Paterson of the television chef duo Two Fat Ladies to his sixth Downing Street bash since May 1. At the same time, 47 Labour MPs were preparing to rebel against a cut in single-parent benefit that will cost new claimants up to £11 a week from April.

Mr Bruce accused the Government of getting its priorities wrong and claimed that £7.4 million would more than cover the cost of maintaining benefit levels next year for new claims by single parents.

A Downing Street spokesman was quick to point out that the Cabinet Office, whose hospitality budget covers Downing Street, had spent only £18,789 on entertaining between May 1 and September 30. He was also anxious to

dispel a common misconception about Mr Blair's gatherings, which, he said, cost between £2,000 and £3,000 each. "I wouldn't call them parties as such. They are what we call general receptions."

He said that they offered the Prime Minister a chance to meet people from all walks of life and thank them for their contribution. "The media concentrate simply on well-known faces from the arts, entertainment and the media ... that sometimes gives a mistaken impression that these are some sort of showbusiness party, which actually they are not."

A Treasury spokesman acknowledged that much of the department's £193,000 expenditure on hospitality had been spent on parties. But he

added: "There is a distinction between what some might call a party and others might call a reception."

At the Department of Health — hospitality bill £56,000 for five months — a spokeswoman said there had been no "major receptions". However, she admitted to "a few small getting-to-know-you meetings".

A spokeswoman for the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions said that its £165,000 bill covered everything from the tea and biscuits given to journalists at press conferences to the catering for big events. Asked whether it covered parties, she said: "You mean official ministerial functions? Yes."

Only the Department of Culture, Media and Sport was prepared to admit throwing a party, perhaps because, with a hospitality bill of £7,000 for five months, it can claim to be the lowest spender to submit figures so far. The Foreign Office was the biggest spender, spending £4.8 million on hospitality around the world from May 1 to September 30.

## 'Usual suspects' joined by rebel newcomers

By JAMES LANDALE AND JILL SHERMAN

THE names of Ken Livingstone and Dennis Skinner have long been familiar among the ranks of Labour dissenters. But Wednesday night's revolt against the Government's plans to cut single-parent benefits revealed a previously unknown pool of rebels whose cards have been marked by the whips.

In total, 47 Labour MPs defied the Government and voted against the cuts. Of those, 22 were members of the Campaign Group of hard-left MPs. These included MPs such as Mr Livingstone, Mr Skinner, Tony Benn, Diane Abbott and Jeremy Corbyn. The whips refer to them as "the usual suspects".

The rebels also included well-known campaigners for single parents' rights such as Alice Mahon, Maria Fyfe, Roger Berry and Gwyneth Dunwoody. But 12 MPs from the new general election intake also voted against the Government. They were Harold Best, Martin Caton, David Chaytor, John Cryer, Hilton Dawson, Jim Dobbin, Ian Gibson, Brian Iddon, Kelvin Hopkins, Mike Wood, Ian Stewart and John McDonnell.

A further 57 Labour MPs did not take part in the vote. Some 20 of these included four Cabinet ministers — Robin Cook, John Prescott, Jack Straw, and Michael Meacher — had been given formal leave

by the whips to miss the vote. But 14 MPs, many of whom spoke against the move, pointedly abstained while remaining in the chamber. These deliberate abstainers contained some familiar rebels such as Julie and Rhodri Morgan, the husband and wife MPs from Cardiff North and West, and George Galloway, Chris Mullin and Harry Cohen.

But the rebel abstainers also included some new MPs: Diana Organ, William Rammell, Tony McWalter, John Naysmith and Huw Edwards.

Of the 23 other abstainers, some had been given the week off to spend time in their constituencies and were not required to vote. But others abstained by staying out of the chamber during the division.

In effect, the 47 rebels and 25 deliberate abstainers combine to form a band of MPs who may defy the whips again. Many, especially the old guard, are those overlooked by Tony Blair when he appointed his Government. The new mavericks are those who realise that their chances of preferment are negligible given the hundreds of ultra-loyal new Labour MPs and who believe that a principled — if disloyal — stand will best ensure their re-election.

Yesterday they found that the Chief Whip, Nick Brown, had shed his traditional man-

tle of harsh discipline in the interests of uniting the party. There had been talk of possible suspensions and other forms of severe disciplinary action for anyone who voted against the third reading of the Social Security Bill. Suspension under new rules introduced this year means that MPs are unable to attend parliamentary party meetings, or backbench committees, do not get information from the whips about votes and are generally ostracised at Westminster. Suspended MPs are also unable to attend official constituency meetings or take part in party functions.

Yesterday the whips chose instead to report three MPs to the National Executive Committee and give the other 44 MPs who voted against the Government "a dressing down". Over the years MPs are said to have broken down in the Chief Whip's office at 12 Downing Street and his room in the Commons. The whips know a huge amount about MPs' personal and professional lives.

Yesterday Mr Brown and his team were keeping silent for fear of aggravating a delicate situation but all 47 MPs are to be seen by either him or his assistants over the next few weeks.

Leading article and Letters, page 23

## Forte for funds at Tory think-tank

By NICHOLAS WOOD

SIR ROCCO FORTE, who salvaged a £300 million family fortune out of the humiliating loss of his father's hotel chain, has been made treasurer of one of the main Conservative think-tanks. He will take over from the Dixons boss Sir Stanley Kalms as the chief fund-raiser for the Centre for Policy Studies in the new year.

Tessa Keswick, director of the Centre founded by Margaret Thatcher and Sir Keith Joseph in the mid-1970s, said yesterday that Sir Rocco's job would be to raise "tens of millions of pounds" to underpin a Tory policy revival. Sir Stanley will stay on the board.

Mrs Keswick, whose hus-

band is the banking tycoon Henry Keswick, said that Sir Rocco had made modest personal contributions to the CPS: "He's going to pick everybody else's pockets now," she said. The CPS finances were "not catastrophic, which cannot be said for the rest of us".

Sir Rocco, 52, has begun building up a new business empire, RF Hotels. Mrs Keswick said he had been a regular supporter of Tory gatherings: "He's interested in the CPS. He will attend board meetings and he takes an interest in policy. I'd say he's centre-right."

Sir Rocco's appointment is the latest move aimed at re-establishing the CPS as the premier Tory think-tank. The former minister David Willetts has become the CPS



Sir Rocco: job to raise 'tens of millions of pounds'

deputy chairman while having day-to-day responsibility for William Hague's policy review.

Nearly two years ago, Sir Rocco, then executive chairman of the Forte Group, lost a £3.8 billion takeover battle to Granada. Among the spoils from the company were the Café Royale, the Waldorf, the Grosvenor House Hotel in Park Lane, and the Happy Easter chain patronised by John Major.

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## So far so good, but Labour's commitment has yet to be tested

THE Government has been as good — and, in some respects, better — than its pre-election promises over freedom of information. David Clark has recently been one of the Cabinet's more beleaguered members. But after lengthy debates in Lord Irvine of Lairg's committee on freedom of information, he has unveiled one of the most radical policy statements since May in his White Paper *Your Right to Know*. As the Campaign for Freedom of Information argues, this offers the prospect of a real change in access to official information. Freedom of information is an elusive concept, desirable in prin-

ciple in a generalised good-government way, but often harder to define in practice. If it is to be worthwhile, it must be much more than a charter for the anoraks of the media and single interest groups to ferret around in public files. Dr Clark has learnt from overseas experience on his much criticised foreign travels, and the White Paper strikes the right balance. It strengthens the right of individuals to access to official information affecting them while not threatening the ability of ministers and civil servants to take decisions in an ordered way after discussing all options in private.

The proposals go significantly further than the existing *Code of Practice* in providing access to documents, not just information, and in its scope. They will involve the whole of the public sector, including the NHS, schools, the armed forces, public service broadcasters, privatised utilities and private bodies carrying out statutory duties on behalf of government. There are also fewer exemptions than now, notably national security, law enforcement, personal privacy and commercial confidentiality. In most cases, information can only be withheld if disclosure would cause "substantial" harm. The

RIDDELL  
ON POLITICS

most important exemption is what the White Paper describes as "the integrity of the decision-making and policy advice processes in government". Sir Humphrey's chats with ministers. In this case, a less demanding "simple" harm test would apply. Dr Clark claims that as much factual and background material, as opposed to policy advice, will be published. For instance, in the recent tobacco sponsorship row, ministers could have been

asked to justify claims about 50,000 job losses if Formula One left Britain, though civil service advice on how to handle the negotiations would have been protected. Similarly, Gordon Brown could, and should, be asked to provide the internal analysis about his claims that the new individual savings accounts will encourage a new class of savers.

The White Paper also sets out a simple and sensible enforcement regime. In particular, a new independent Information Commissioner will be created, akin to the Data Protection Registrar. He or she will have the power to

order disclosure, compared with the present right of the parliamentary ombudsman only to recommend disclosure. The commissioner will also review charges made by public bodies, though the whole area of fees needs to be clarified. There will not be a further right of appeal to the courts.

As Rhodri Morgan, chairman of the Public Administration Committee pointed out in the Commons, much will depend on the identity of the first commissioner and the exercise of his or her powers. It is unsatisfactory that he or she will be appointed by the Prime Minister without

involving Parliament. The Commons should confirm the appointment and oversee the commissioner's activities. The commissioner should also not be a retired permanent secretary or the like and have too cosy a relationship with Whitehall, as a number of utility regulators have with their industries. He or she needs to be seen to be independent. The Government has gone a long way. But only implementation, and a few bruising rows, will establish the genuineness of its commitment to open government.

PETER RIDDELL

## Ministers set out vision for new era of openness

Valerie Elliott  
on moves to end  
the culture of  
secrecy in  
government

PLANS to end the traditional culture of secrecy in government and the public services by giving the public a legal "right to know" were set out yesterday in a White Paper on Freedom of Information.

The proposed new laws, which could be in force within two years, will apply across government and will include thousands of public bodies, quangos, the NHS, local government, schools, colleges, universities, the armed forces, the administrative functions of police and courts, the BBC, the private utility companies and many other private concerns — including Camelot, the National Lottery operator — which carry out statutory functions for the government.

Information and actual documentation will be withheld only if disclosure would cause "substantial harm" — a test which would give Britain the most open laws on freedom of information in the world. Only the release of official advice to ministers will come under the tougher test of whether disclosure would cause harm — a move insisted on by Mr Blair on the basis that "the Government needed space to conduct its business".

But even if a minister or department refuses to disclose information, an individual will be able to take his case

directly to a new independent Information Commissioner, who would be answerable to the courts, not to ministers.

About 200 laws which specifically prohibit release of information will be repealed or changed.

The proposals went further than campaigners had ever imagined after David Clark, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, won the crucial backing of Tony Blair for the reforms which will be retrospective, and could open up thousands of historic records.

Mr Blair, in a foreword to the White Paper, said: "The traditional culture of secrecy will only be broken down by giving people in the UK the legal right to know." He said the move was "a fundamental and vital change in the relationship between government and the governed".

The new commissioner, to be appointed by the Prime

Minister, will have access to all documents including Cabinet and Cabinet committee papers which are not covered under the present code on access to information, and will have the power to order disclosure of information.

He will have to consider the harm tests in relation to seven criteria:

- national security, defence and international relations
- law enforcement
- personal privacy
- commercial confidentiality
- the safety of the individual, the public and the environment
- information supplied in confidence
- The integrity of the decision-making and policy advice processes in government.

The security and intelligence services are excluded from the proposed new laws. So, too, are papers relating to criminal prosecutions, and government personnel files.

If the government or an individual is still unhappy with a decision, they may seek a judicial review in the courts, but will not have an automatic right of appeal before a judge.

A new criminal offence "for the wilful or reckless destruction, alteration or withholding of records" will apply to ministers, officials and staff working for designated public



organisations. The new Commissioner will be able to apply for a warrant to enter or search premises, and to remove documents, if there is any suspicion that papers are being withheld.

All requests will cost an initial £10 and departments will then be able to charge extra costs for the time taken to identify the information.

Dr Clark's proposals were generally welcomed by MPs and he seemed to brush off the furor over the leaking of the details of the White Paper to the BBC earlier this week. He told the Commons that his

inquiry was "progressing". He was determined the new laws should help the ordinary citizen, not commercial interests. He said that the proposals "would transform this country from one of the most closed democracies in the world to one of the most open".

Maurice Frankel, director of the Campaign for the Freedom of Information, said last night: "This is a substantial reform that for the first time will give the British public a genuine right to know what its government is doing in its name."

## Straw heads off pressure for curbs on press

By Valerie Elliott, Whitehall Editor

MINISTERS are safeguarding the work of journalists who investigate powerful people in the public interest. The Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, had been understood to think that there was some merit in the proposed data protection legislation being used as a privacy law, but Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, has won the support of Cabinet colleagues to prevent this.

Lord Irvine was supported by Elizabeth France, the Data Protection Registrar, who was also keen that files held by the press should be subject to access. But ministers believe the media should have a defence for legitimate activities and a "public interest" defence to deny people access to information held on them.

The formula was worked out by Lord Williams of Mostyn, QC, a junior Home Office Minister — and one of the country's leading libel lawyers — after consultations with media representatives and the Press Complaints Commission. A government source yesterday called the

proposal "a licence for journalists to roam".

Under the proposals, Miss France will have to get permission from a court before she can intervene on behalf of an individual for access to files before or after publication of an article. She would be able to issue an information notice against an organisation if there was "reasonable suspicion" that the data was being held longer than necessary, and that information was being collected with no plans to publish. Only if the media refused to comply could she ask the court for a warrant to force disclosure of the files.

The Data Protection Bill, to be enacted next year alongside the European Convention of Human Rights, will implement a European Union directive giving the public the right to inspect files. The proposals are being published next week.

The Press Complaints Commission said last night: "It seems a sensible balance has been achieved between the rights of individuals and the rights of journalists."

LAURA ASHLEY

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## Gun-spree killer is found not guilty

Wellington: The man who confessed to one of New Zealand's worst mass killings was found not guilty yesterday of six murders and four attempted murders because he was insane at the time.

It took just over two hours for the jury of eight women and four men to decide that Stephen Anderson, 25, was insane when he went on a shooting spree in the North Island hamlet of Raurimu on February 8.

Anderson, appearing in the High Court at Hamilton, was ordered confined to a high-security mental health institution.

Psychiatrists had told the court Anderson was obsessed with firearms and hated police. He used drugs and had what one doctor called a flimsy hold on reality.

The announcement of the jury's verdict brought an outcry from the public gallery. (Reuters)

## Pets face slaughter in Hong Kong flu scare

Doctors fear world spread of a chicken-borne virus, write Tom Rhodes and Jonathan Mirsky

AS HEALTH experts warned that chicken-borne flu could become a pandemic disease, Hong Kong schools prepared for the possibility of having to destroy pet animals.

The mysterious "bird flu" has killed two people. Children at primary schools with pet 200s are being given warnings to keep their distance from chickens and not to handle pet birds at home.

"If the disease spreads further, we may close our pet corner and the animals will be killed," said Kung Winglong, a primary school director.

The first victim of the mystery flu was a Hong Kong child who attended a school that kept baby chickens and ducks. Health officials said they were involved in a race against time to solve the mystery of the H5N1 strain of flu, which is normally confined to chickens.

Medical staff at the Prince of Wales Hospital issued a press release saying that the authorities had been slow to react to the virus and had not taken appropriate precau-

tions. They complained that, although they are treating a 13-year-old girl with the disease, they were not immediately told of the virus. The girl "is not on isolation nursing, even though it was suspected that she has contracted H5N1," they said. The isolation ward did not have special ventilation and it was possible that other patients in the hospital would be infected with the virus, they added.

The hospital said: "H5N1 is a new disease and the hospital's response is guided by the information available."

The Atlanta Centres for Disease Control, America's health agency, said last night its scientists could not rule out the possibility that the flu could become a pandemic disease. Doctors from the centres have been seconded to

monitor events in Hong Kong and the agency has been holding daily meetings to discuss the new strain. "It is very hard to predict whether this will become the next pandemic," said K.D. Hoskins, from the agency's Atlanta headquarters. "At the moment we do not see it as such but we cannot rule that out as a possibility."

Authorities in Guangdong, not far from Hong Kong, are monitoring chickens bound for the city. Sales of the birds have plummeted.

A senior health official in Guangdong said yesterday that many birds died last year and early this year, but claimed the symptoms found in the dead birds were different from those associated with the H5N1 virus. However, it is believed that at least a million

Guangdong chickens died of H5N1 in February. Leading health authorities say that the cause of the virus is unknown.

Dr Margaret Chan, Hong Kong's director of health, said: "We must extend our net of investigation. It seems that we are entering into a competition with the virus. We want to come up with a plan of action."

Dr Keiji Fukuda of the Atlanta team denied that patients contract the disease only through contact with chickens. "It's simply not clear how the virus is being transmitted... It is most likely poultry to human, human to human, or some combination."

Dr Fukuda, chief of epidemiology at the Atlanta centres, added: "There are worldwide implications for this disease and the idea of it becoming a fourth pandemic is one issue we are concerned about. There are theories that southern China is a place where the next pandemic could start."

Millions have died in global epidemics this century. Spanish flu in 1918 and Asian flu in the 1950s and 1960s.



A vendor handling a chicken in Hong Kong where birds have been hit by the virus

### WORLD IN BRIEF

## Kohl loses nuclear shelter in cash cut

Bonn: Helmut Kohl's refuge from nuclear war, a bunker dug deep into the sloping vineyards outside Bonn, is to be closed to save money and keep Germany on track for European economic and monetary union (Roger Boyes writes). The concrete warren, used by Nazi slave labourers to build engines for V2 rockets, may soon be used to grow mushrooms or store wine. The complex, which may have been connected by tunnels to the Defence Ministry 12 miles away, has been regarded as one of the most closely guarded secrets of the German state. It contains a Cabinet room, a parliamentary chamber, kitchens, huge food stores, a hospital and a communications centre.

## Children held by fugitive

Orlando: A murder suspect holding two children hostage told his family he might commit suicide, but police said he had assured them he would not harm himself. Police remained optimistic that John Edward Armstrong, a professional criminal who was freed from prison early, would eventually release Malcolm Phillips, four, and his two-year-old cousin, Tedi Priest. Armstrong was fleeing police, who suspected him of killing a man and wounding a woman. "He's real tired. He's working through what his options are," Captain Sal Lomonaco, commander of the negotiating team, said. (AP)

## Harare union chief attacked

Harare: Morgan Tsvangirai, Zimbabwe's main trade union chief, was attacked and injured by unidentified assailants who invaded his office, two days after organising unprecedented anti-tax protests against Robert Mugabe's Government, his union group said. The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions said it suspected the attackers of trying to kill Mr Tsvangirai, its secretary-general. He was cut above the right eye after being hit by a chair and a knobkerrie wielded by some of the seven people who stormed the premises. (Reuters)

## Suharto banishes rumours

Jakarta: Relaxed and smiling, President Suharto, right, was seen on Indonesian television yesterday in his first public appearance since rumours started that he was seriously ill or dead. Indonesia's currency fell by 11 per cent earlier this week. The 76-year-old President, who has been ordered by his doctors to rest for ten days, was shown seated at home, chatting with a Cabinet minister and one of his three daughters. He is said to suffer from hypertension and kidney stones. (Reuters)



## Russian air crash kills eight

Moscow: A cargo plane struck a helicopter on a runway at Narynmar, northern Russia, killing eight people, a spokesman for the Ministry for Emergency Situations said. The Mi8 helicopter with 16 people on board had just landed when it was clipped by the wing of a landing Antonov An12, the ministry's duty officer said. He added that all those who died had been aboard the helicopter. The two pilots of the cargo plane were seriously injured. (AP)

## \$387,500 for Bernstein piano

New York: A piano owned and autographed by Leonard Bernstein, the composer and conductor, sold for \$387,500 (£236,000) at Sotheby's. It was expected to fetch about \$80,000 but last-minute telephone bidding by an American physician boosted the sale price. Proceeds from the auction of the late conductor's personal effects totalled \$720,000 and will go to the Bernstein Education Through the Arts Fund. (Reuters)

## Poll boost for Lafontaine

Bonn: Oskar Lafontaine, left, the Social Democrat (SPD) leader who has long been labelled a loser, has for the first time beaten Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, in a public opinion poll. The ZDF poll showed Herr Lafontaine beating Herr Kohl by 44 to 43 per cent, only ten months before general elections. However Gerhard Schröder, Herr Lafontaine's chief rival in the SPD, came up, with 57 per cent choosing him in preference to 32 per cent for Herr Kohl. (AFP)

## Explorer Polunin dies at 88

Geneva: Professor Nicholas Polunin, an early environmentalist and an explorer who discovered the last major islands to be added to the world map, has died in Geneva. He was 88. Educated at Oxford, Harvard and Yale, Polunin is credited with discovering two large islands in Canada's Arctic archipelago in 1946. Prince Charles and Air Force Islands in Hudson Bay. (AP)

## Inspectors' hidden agenda

Santiago: Chile's mid-term legislative election was delayed at many polling stations as authorities failed to find enough citizens to serve as inspectors. Reports said that many people hid in bushes, feigned illness or locked themselves in bathrooms to avoid being summoned to do their legal duty. (Reuters)

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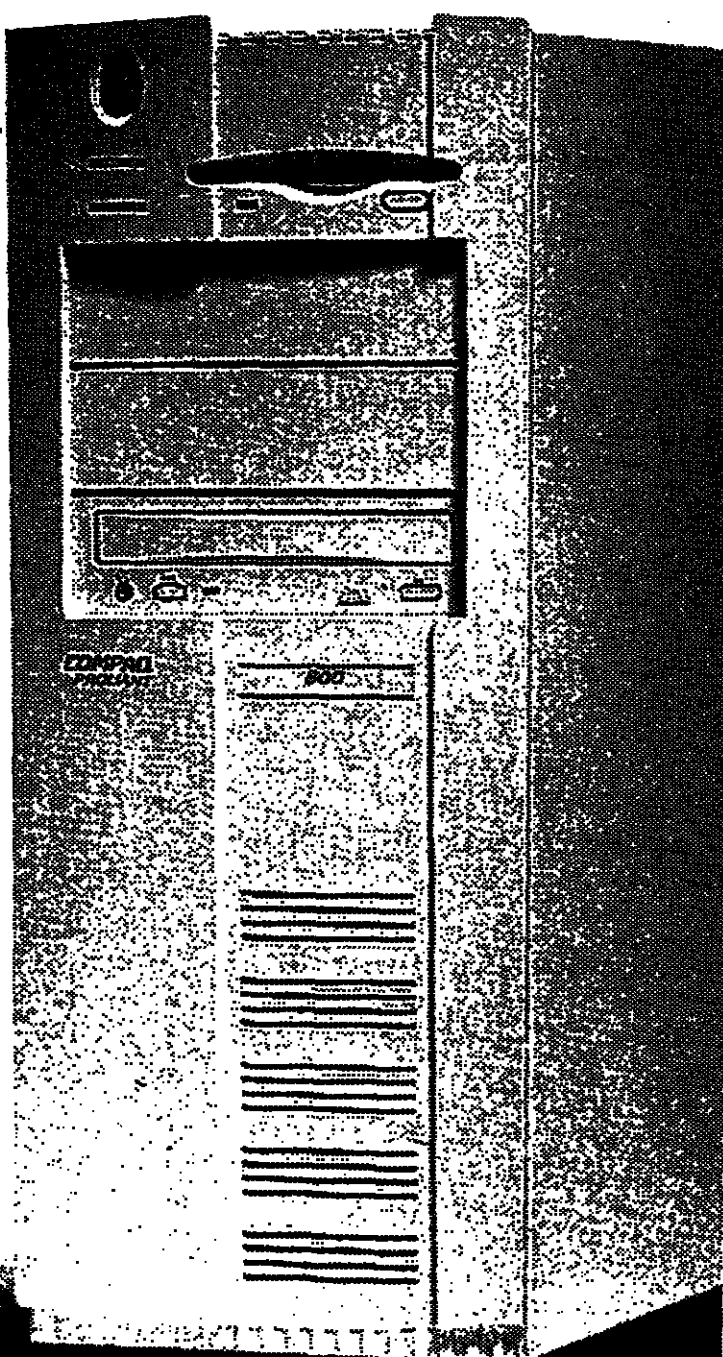
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# US senators vow to kill off climate deal

THE United States will not ratify the new international climate change treaty for years, if ever, senators said yesterday, as they queued up to declare that the agreement reached in Kyoto was "dead in the water".

"What we have here is not ratifiable in the Senate in my judgement," John Kerry, a Democrat and an observer of the 11-day talks, said as exhausted negotiators from 166 countries reached a final agreement, described as the most complex non-military accord in history. Chuck Hagel, a Republican, said: "There is no way that the vote in the US Senate will even be close. We will kill this Bill."

The agreement, which seemed unachievable until the eleventh hour, was reached only after significant concessions by the US to the European Union and developing countries. But the implacable opposition of much of the Senate to the final version appears to dash President Clinton's hopes of early and easy ratification, and to doom

Despite chorus of hostility, Clinton pledges to keep faith with Kyoto treaty, Bronwen Maddox reports

the US to the condemnation of other industrialised countries. Environmentalists, who had hailed the treaty as the most important environmental accord yet reached, began yesterday to focus on the likelihood that it would be seriously undermined by the refusal of the world's largest economy to commit itself to the legally binding targets. The support of two thirds of the Senate is needed for the US to ratify the treaty.

Under the Kyoto accord, industrialised countries have committed themselves to reduce emission of greenhouse gases by 6 per cent or more below 1990 levels by 2012. The US has agreed to cuts of 7 per cent and the European Union to 8 per cent.

The US won one battle — extending the accord to carbon

dioxide and five other gases, rather than the three gases recommended by other countries. But it lost two important battles: to set up a system of "tradeable permits" allowing countries to buy the right to pollute from each other; and to bring developing countries into the accord.

Before the Kyoto talks, the Senate voted 95 to zero for a resolution that the US would not commit itself to a treaty that did not impose curbs on developing countries.

In its last-minute decision to sign, the White House was swayed by the desire not to antagonise the environmental lobby. Vice-President Al Gore, who attended the talks, has courted this group in his bid for the presidency in 2000. President Clinton, who called the agreement "historic" and

"unprecedented", credited Mr Gore with helping to bring about a "realistic and achievable commitment". Democratic senators yesterday urged the President to wait until further international meetings next year to address the questions of tradeable permits and developing countries before putting the treaty to the Senate. But supporters of the Bill fear that this would push ratification beyond the November 1998 congressional elections into the countdown for the 2000 presidential race.

The Administration has indicated that, if Senate ratification is not forthcoming, it will still make a "good faith" effort to comply with the main provisions. Mr Clinton says he believes the US can make cuts in emissions without severe economic pain.

Yesterday heavy industry, coal, oil, cars and electricity joined forces to battle the accord, arguing that the curbs will resemble the energy shocks of the 1970s.

Leading article, page 23



Pelé: determined to end fraud and slavery in football

# Pelé tackles clubs over corruption

FROM GABRIELLA GAMINI IN RIO DE JANEIRO

THE Brazilian Congress has approved a law proposed by Pelé, the football icon, aimed at stamping out the corruption that has for decades characterised the clubs managing the multimillion-dollar sport.

The Pelé Law, named after Brazil's "King of Football", will need the Senate's vote of approval and has to be signed by President Cardoso before it can be implemented. But Pelé, whose real name is Edson Arantes do Nascimento and who has championed the new law since he was appointed Brazil's Minister for Sports in 1995, celebrated yesterday saying: "It means the end of slavery and widespread corruption in Brazilian football."

Congressional approval, he said, meant that his "battle was almost won". The law gives Brazilian clubs two years to become private commercial companies, which means they can have their accounts scrutinised by tax collectors and investors. Brazil's 5,000 football clubs are described as non-profit-making institutions but they deal with multimillion-dollar player transfers and are not subject to control.

Club directors and regional and national football federations voiced the most outspoken opposition to the new law. "The opposition from the club managers and federation heads is because they don't want transparency in the multimillion-dollar deals, which they have so far managed with no controls whatsoever," said Pelé.

The law proposes reducing the time before players become owners of their own contracts. They will be obliged to fulfil an initial two-year professional contract with the club that trained them, and give first choice to that club in the second contract, but from then on they can negotiate directly with new clubs.

Hundreds of Brazilian players have been bought by foreign clubs and controversy has surrounded their transfers because their local clubs managed the deals. Under the Pelé Law, clubs will be able to organise provincial and regional championships independently of football federations, which in Brazil have been tainted by corruption and nepotism for decades.

# Greenpeace brands gases pact a farce

London: While world leaders hailed the Kyoto agreement on greenhouse gases yesterday, the environmental group Greenpeace dismissed it as "a tragedy and a farce", and other conference delegates felt it did not go far enough.

"This is not good enough for the future," Ritt Bjerregaard, the European Union's Environment Commissioner, said in Kyoto. "We would have liked the parties to be more ambitious."

Germany said it would

probably stick to its goal of cutting emissions by 25 per cent by 2005, although under the Kyoto accord the EU as a whole was committed only to an 8 per cent cut by 2010.

Japanese businessmen expressed concern that the emission targets accepted by Japan would prove hard to meet. British business was more circumspect. "I would hope Kyoto would focus minds and bring up some of the laggards," a Safeway spokeswoman said.

# Rangers deliver unhappy ending for three bears

RANGERS at Yosemite National Park have been forced to kill three black bears descended from an animal which mauled a British student in the Californian tourist spot four years ago.

Minney and her two cubs were shot with a tranquilliser and then put to sleep after being caught under cover of darkness at the scene of their latest crime, tearing their way through the back seat and the boot of a car in search of a jar of salsa, a brick of tofu and a grapefruit.

It was the latest in a bear rampage of burglary and destruction at Yosemite which has resulted in a record 600 car break-ins this year, causing \$300,000 (£304,000) in damage.

Some of the bulky animals have become so used to human food that they no longer show any interest in acorns and elderberries, the once traditional bear necessities. The three bears in question may have picked up their bad habits from Swatter, Minney's mother. She attacked Tom Watson in a clearing in 1993 and the student from Somerset escaped serious injury by hiding in a lavatory for nine hours.

Officials believe bad blood is not part of the bear genealogy. There has never been a death or a serious mauling at Yosemite by black bears, creatures for which the park has become famous.

Steve Thompson, the park's wildlife biologist, said careless humans who left food in their cars were responsible for the sudden surge in property damage. Minney and her offspring, he said, were simply hunting for food and their antics had forced rangers to order their deaths.

"Bears are smart, and some are very smart," he said. "My problems start when the smarter bears and the dumber

Yosemite's stars shun nuts and berries in favour of picnic food, writes Tom Rhodes

visitors intersect." In the past two months, attracted by the smell of a bumper apple crop near a particular campground, bears have been popping up windows, clawing through doors as if opening a can of soup, and crawling into as many as 15 cars a night. Hondas, Dodge Caravans and older Toyotas are said to be their favourite targets, but a BMW convertible has also sustained \$5,000 in damage. Federal law makes it a crime to store food overnight in any vehicle at Yosemite. A bulletin board of pictures showing bear-vandalised cars greets visitors at Curry Village in the commercial heart of the valley. Campers are told either to get rid of their food or store it in recently installed lockers. But even these may not be bear-proof. Rangers have watched in awe as the animals have unscrewed peanut butter jars with their paws and opened food lockers using a paw and snout to trip the latch.

When the park introduced municipal rubbish bins whose mouths shut like a mail box, the bears learnt to climb up, open the slot and drop in head first, with only their back legs clinging to the open door.

So the rangers' ultimate option has been the one they most dread: killing repeat offenders. Yosemite is also considering a range of solutions, including the removal of apple trees, a reduction in the number of car parks and even a bear contraceptive to prevent the need for any further killing.

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# Saddam executes hundreds in new terror campaign

By MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA AND MICHAEL BINYON

AT LEAST 800 prisoners have been executed in Iraq where President Saddam Hussein has embarked on a new campaign of terror to keep his security forces alert and his suffering people cowed.

Most were suspected of belonging to opposition groups and the mutilated bodies of some were returned to their families, dissidents said in a report that diplomats described as "entirely plausible". The prisoners were executed in two jails as part of a so-called "prison cleansing campaign" organised by Saddam's younger son, Qusai, who controls the state's security apparatus. Some were shot dead, the others electrocuted, the opposition Iraqi National Congress said.

The group linked the executions to the recent crisis over weapons inspections and said Saddam often "increases repression when he feels triumphant". Richard Butler, who heads the United Nations body charged with disarming Iraq, is due in Baghdad today to insist on unimpeded access to all sites, including Saddam's many palaces.

Security Council resolutions gave the inspectors the right to

go wherever they suspected there might be weapons of mass destruction. Mr Butler insisted. He said Iraqi attempts to refuse access to the palaces or other sensitive areas were producing ambiguity and growing difficulties.

"We can't work that way if we are to help the Iraqi people to have a normal life," Mr

**The Iraqi leader thrives on a state of crisis. It keeps the people living in fear**

Butler said in London after talks with Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, on Wednesday. He was due to discuss access as soon as he arrived in Baghdad, and would remind Iraq that it is obliged to help the inspectors to identify remaining weapons.

Mr Butler refused to give a timetable for completion of his task. "It is in their hands," he

said of the Iraqi authorities. He said the inspectors had not received the necessary co-operation from Iraq over biological weapons.

The Iraqi media, which described Mr Butler as a "mad dog", predicted that his mission was "doomed to fail". The United States, which has two aircraft carriers in the Gulf, said it would allow diplomacy to run its course, but is keeping open the military option to enforce Iraqi compliance.

Mr Butler's arrival will coincide with a carefully-staged street party in Baghdad to mark the first anniversary of a failed assassination attempt on Uday Hussein, Saddam's eldest son and one-time heir apparent who was left crippled by the ambush. It emerged yesterday that Uday's personal doctor, Hassan al-Khudairy, recently fled to Saudi Arabia after a heated row, leaving his family behind.

The reports come days after Iraq hanged four Jordanian men it accused of smuggling spare car parts worth a total of just \$400 (£250). Jordan, whose press yesterday accused Iraq of "betrayal", has



Relatives of two Jordanian brothers hanged in Iraq for smuggling mourn at their home in Amman yesterday

retaliated by recalling its charge d'affaires from Baghdad and sharply cutting Iraq's diplomatic presence in Amman. A statement published by the official news agency yesterday called for the immediate release of any remaining Jordanians held in Iraq. King Hussein had personally intervened in an attempt to prevent the executions.

The hangings were seen as an inexplicable and gratuitous

snub to a sympathetic neighbour and have angered other Arab countries that are supportive of Iraq's calls for an end to sanctions. The Iraqi Foreign Ministry said it was surprised at the fuss surrounding the executions, saying it was a case of economic sabotage against a sanctions-hit country.

Jordan's response was its toughest diplomatic stand since King Hussein, once

Iraq's staunchest Arab ally, began publicly calling for political change in Baghdad following high-level defections in 1995. But in recent months relations had again been improving, with visiting Iraqi officials such as Tariq Aziz, the Deputy Prime Minister, being accommodated in guest houses rather than in hotels.

"Saddam must be trying to send some sort of message to Jordan, but God knows what,"

an Arab diplomat in Amman said. "What is clear is that he thrives on a state of crisis. It keeps the regime alert and the people in fear."

The executions may be intended as a warning to smugglers trying to muscle in on the multimillion-pound black market controlled by Saddam's family, who have amassed vast fortunes since sanctions were imposed seven years ago, diplomats said.

## Israelis ban Arab census in Holy City

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

YASSIR ARAFAT'S Palestinian Authority vowed defiantly yesterday to continue conducting its census among the estimated 180,000 Arabs in east Jerusalem, despite a rushed new Israeli law to outlaw it.

Just before midnight last night the Knesset voted 26-11 to tighten Israel's grip over east Jerusalem by imposing a broad ban on Palestinian political activity in the city.

Binyamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, pushed the Bill through parliament in highly unusual and accelerated proceedings, after Israeli legal experts informed him that an existing prohibition did not cover Palestinian census-taking.

France was the first international voice to condemn the new Israeli move to strengthen its control over the disputed Holy City. Most countries, including Britain, do not recognise Israel's claim to sovereignty and maintain embassies in Tel Aviv.

Faisal al-Husseini, the PLO-appointed official in charge of Palestinian affairs in east Jerusalem, accused Israel of using "repression" and said it was the Palestinians' right to gather figures concerning their people and that the census would continue "one way or another".

## Islamic statesmen spurn extremists

By MICHAEL THEODOULOU

MUSLIM leaders condemned Israel as a "terrorist state", but also denounced terrorism in the name of Islam as they ended a summit in Iran yesterday.

The Tehran Declaration called for "interaction, dialogue and understanding among cultures and religions", reflecting the spirit of the opening speech by Iran's moderate President, Muhammad Khatami.

The gathering had provided his first big opportunity to convince the world he is determined to steer his country on a pragmatic new course. Egypt and Saudi Arabia, the Islamic world's most important states and both key American allies, promised to take steps to improve ties with Iran, while Kofi Annan, the United Nations Secretary-General, endorsed Mr Khatami as a man with whom the world could do business.

The joint declaration was predictably harsh on Israel. A copy of the statement due to be read last night called for "the liberation of all occupied

Arab land and for the restoration of the usurped rights of the Palestinian people". It condemned Israel's "expansionist policies" and demanded a halt to Jewish settlements in Jerusalem.

The summit, which included 28 heads of state, prime ministers and crown princes, also condemned terrorism committed in the name of Islam. Mr Khatami distinguished terrorism from the struggle of peoples against colonial or alien domination or foreign occupation. The issue of terrorism had topped the agenda after massacres in Algeria and the slaughter of 62 tourists at Luxor in Egypt.

Mr Khatami held a 25-minute meeting yesterday with Taha Yassin Ramadan, the Iraqi Vice-President — the highest-level contact since the two countries ended an eight-year war in 1988, that cost hundreds of thousands of lives.

Speculation grew in Tehran last night that Iran and Iraq would soon exchange ambassadors.

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# Kremlin denies heart link to Yeltsin illness

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT YELTSIN, undergoing treatment for a viral infection, yesterday cancelled, on medical advice, a planned radio address to the nation.

Mr Yeltsin, 66, had expressed his determination to go ahead with the weekly address after being admitted on Wednesday to the Barvikha sanatorium outside Moscow, where he spent several months earlier this year convalescing after his heart bypass operation and a bout of pneumonia last November.

Kremlin statement said last night that Mr Yeltsin's doctors had advised him against aggravating catarrh in his throat by recording the speech, which usually lasts ten minutes. On this occasion the speech was to have marked the annual holiday today, Constitution Day, a landmark on the Yeltsin calendar commemorating the new Russian Constitution adopted after the bloody clashes in Moscow of October 1993.

There has been speculation that Mr Yeltsin's latest medical problems could be linked with a recurrence of his heart problems, but a presidential

spokesman denied reports that he had suffered a new bout of heart trouble. Independent doctors say such a recurrence could well manifest itself in the form of a respiratory complaint.

Unfortunately for Kremlin officials, their past record of playing down Mr Yeltsin's health crises has led to scepticism about their current reassurances. In July last year, just before the crucial second round of the presidential elections, Mr Yeltsin was

said to be suffering from a cold and fatigue.

It turned out that he had suffered a heart attack which kept him out of the public eye for weeks. Policy has, however, changed considerably since then and Mr Yeltsin himself announced on television that he was about to undergo heart surgery, weeks ahead of the operation.

The Yeltsin administration reacted quickly yesterday to play down the latest rumours. The Itar-Tass news agency quoted Michael DeBakey, the veteran American cardiologist who advised Mr Yeltsin's operating team last year, as saying there was no cause for alarm.

"I have not talked to Boris Yeltsin's doctors, and the very fact that there has not been a need for such a conversation shows that the situation is not alarming," Itar-Tass quoted him as saying in a telephone interview from New York. Interfax news agency quoted Renat Akchurin, the surgeon who led the operating team, as saying that Mr Yeltsin's condition has "no connection" with his heart surgery.

Mr Akchurin has remained close to the presidential entourage ever since the operation and accompanied Mr Yeltsin on recent visits to China and Sweden. Last month he pronounced the President fully recovered from his heart problems. Until this week, there appeared little ground for doubts about this. Mr Yeltsin has appeared more robust and energetic for the past few months than for two years before his operation, and has shown no lack of resolve in pushing his policies through and confronting opposition leaders.

Russian television showed pictures last night of Mr Yeltsin receiving Valentin Yumashev, the head of his administration, at Barvikha earlier in the day. The President looked pale and seemed a little unsteady, but no worse than might be expected of a man of his age suffering from a throat infection.



Yeltsin on TV yesterday: "no cause for alarm"

## Doctors 'wise to act'

IN VIEW of President Yeltsin's history of myxoedema (reduced thyroid function) and consequent coronary heart disease, followed by a multiple bypass operation, his doctors are wise to take any respiratory tract infection seriously.

All chest infections will reduce the efficiency of the lungs and hence the oxygenation of the blood will suffer. Poorly oxygenated blood, in turn, will put an added strain on the heart.

The chest pain that the President has been feeling may well stem from his pulmonary infection, but there is always the possibility that it is of cardiac origin, which explains his physicians' anxiety.

The President's recovery, once it was discovered that poor thyroid function was the

basic cause of his cardiovascular problems, has surprised the medical profession. However, the biochemical changes caused by myxoedema must have been damaging all his arteries for many years and this damage will not be entirely repaired by his bypass operation.

The President continues to show some signs of Parkinsonism, but in general his health has been so much better and his vitality so much more obvious that these signs have been obscured.

Any complacency will be misplaced, however, and the President's health will continue to need the careful supervision that it has constantly been receiving.

DR THOMAS STUTTAFFORD



Giuseppe Ferrigno with figures, Princess Diana, Padre Pio and Mother Teresa

## Nativity artist in Naples puts Diana among secular saints

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

THREE months after her death in Paris, Diana, the Princess of Wales, has become immortalised as a figure in this year's Italian Christmas cribs, together with Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who died only days after the Princess, and Gianni Versace, the Italian fashion designer gunned down in Miami Beach in July.

Giuseppe Ferrigno, a Neapolitan craftsman who comes from a long line of crib-makers in Naples, said the late Princess was "one of the great figures of our time". Customers can buy the terracotta Diana figure separately

to set among the more traditional Marys and Josephs, or they can opt for the de luxe "celebrity crib" in which Diana appears as Mary, together with — in a humorous touch — three prominent Italian personalities as the Three Wise Men: Silvio Berlusconi, the media tycoon and former Prime Minister; Gianni Agnelli, the Fiat magnate; and Romano Prodi, the Prime Minister.

"There is nothing wrong in mixing novelties with tradition," said Giuseppe's son, Marco, who makes the figures with him in the workshop in the San Gregorio di

Armeno backstreets of Naples. "The three are linked: Mother Teresa was very close to Diana, and so was Versace."

Proceeds from the sale of the Mother Teresa figure will go to the Naples branch of the Sisters of Charity, the order she founded. The practice of including modern secular figures in the Naples cribs is not new, but it is rare for the Ferrignos and other crib-makers to honour foreigners in this way. The Diana figure costs about £5 and comes in a variety of gowns and dresses, including some of those designed for her by Versace.

## Neo-Nazi army scandals derail R  he's career

Roger Boyes reports on how the dream of replacing Kohl was shattered

THE up-and-coming career of Volker R  he, the German Defence Minister once tipped as a future Chancellor, has taken a nose-dive as a result of almost daily revelations about the neo-Nazi penetration of the army. "His job is now on the line," said Walter Kolbrow, opposition defence spokesman, and many analysts agree. Certainly the bull-necked minister now stands little chance of realising his dream to succeed Herr Kohl.

Conspiracy theories abound. The leaks of far-right activity in the barracks room and officers' mess — the latest disclosures were published by *Stern* magazine yesterday — suggest that a group within the army is trying to embarrass or edge out the minister. Private videos showing off-duty soldiers playing Nazi-era war games, giving Hitler salutes, torturing civilians or pretending to climb into gas ovens have been sent to magazines and television stations.

The most powerful attempt to smear Herr R  he's reputation was a disclosure this week that Manfred Roeder, a top neo-Nazi, was invited to lecture at an army staff academy. His record has been carefully chronicled by the federal counter-espionage service in its openly published annual report. Yet he was invited to discuss the politically sensitive subject of the re-Germanisation of former East Prussia and was given army surplus vehicles to supply aid to ethnic Germans in Kaliningrad. Herr R  he has suspended two senior officers involved in the Roeder lecture — one is now the army's head of manpower planning.

The military counter-espionage service is investigating 760 cases of far-right activity and has been watching 138 suspect soldiers. Neo-Nazi activity has more than trebled since last year and some has spilled over outside the barracks into wild, drunken street chases of foreigners.

There are relatively

straightforward explanations for this behaviour. One is that neo-Nazi groups have targeted the army for infiltration. Another is that political education, once writ large, is now neglected.

However, the sudden force of the disclosures seems to point to more conspiratorial explanations. Former General Gerd Schmuckle said yesterday that Herr R  he had made a fundamental error in splitting the army into small, privileged elite units that are trained for combat missions abroad and the mass of poorly equipped, poorly paid conscripts. That, he said, had created serious frictions.

The frontiers between honouring military heroes and far-right extremism are being blurred. The open question is whether this blurring is deliberate. If so, who is behind it and why are they trying to unsettle Herr R  he? The military counter-espionage investigators think they may be able to unravel part of this mystery by finding out who recommended Herr Roeder as an army lecturer.



R  he: future is now in jeopardy

## Return of Italy's royal exiles a step closer

BY RICHARD OWEN

THE return of the exiled Italian Royal Family to Italy overcame another hurdle yesterday when MPs of Left and Right joined forces to give a first reading to a Bill which would allow Victor Emmanuel, son of the last reigning monarch, to come back to the country next year.

Victor Emmanuel, 60, who left Italy as

a young boy in 1946 and who now lives in Switzerland, said in a statement from New York that he and his son, Emmanuel Filiberto, welcomed the move, which they hoped would enable them to "live as Italians among Italians". He expressed his "great emotion at this good news".

In a free "vote of conscience" in the lower house, MPs from the ruling centre-left coalition, which normally relies on

Communist MPs for a majority, were joined by those from the opposition Centre-Right to push the measure through. The Bill, which has several further hurdles to cross, would revise the 1946 Constitution, which bans male members of the House of Savoy and their male descendants "from setting foot on Italian soil. But an amendment would bar them from engaging in politics.

## Germans dress up package holidays

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

GERMANS, Europe's most energetic tourists, are being encouraged to leave their beach towels and suitcases at home and travel on summer holidays next year with nothing more than the clothes they stand up in.

The trend towards so-called "all-inclusive" holidays has been taken to headline-grabbing extremes by the package tour group, TUI, which is offering Germans a completely new designer wardrobe. Included in the €1,200 for two weeks in Puerto Plata in the Dominican Republic are a linen shirt, linen trousers, espadrilles, sandals, shirts, shorts, swimming trunks, underwear and a belt.

The advantage is that German tourists cannot go in for their traditional competitive dressing for dinner. The disadvantage seems to be that they will be wearing a uniform, albeit one conceived by Oscar de la Renta, designer to Nancy Reagan and other celebrities.

Eberhard Wullop, TUI product manager, said: "Our tourists will not be identical. They will be offered clothes in different sizes and different colours."

The economics of this scheme hinges on what writer Nicholas Coleridge has called the "fashion conspiracy". Many designer clothes costing thousands of pounds in the West are produced at relatively low cost by cheap labour in poor countries such as the Dominican Republic.

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## THE SUNDAY TIMES

HAVE A VERY STYLISH CHRISTMAS

Glamorous gowns, gorgeous gifts... at this time of year, Style is even more important

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

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# Jackal ready to 'fight like tiger' in Paris court

THE world's most notorious professional terrorist, "Carlos the Jackal", will walk — or more likely swagger — into a Paris court today to face trial in person for the first time.

The 48-year-old 'Venezuelan', whose real name is Nlich Ramírez Sánchez, has already been convicted in absentia for the 1975 killing of two French secret service agents and their Lebanese informer. His retrial on those charges, expected to last at least a week, represents only a fraction of the carnage attributed to one of the most sinister, colourful and complex figures of the Cold War era.

For the French authorities, the trial is a belated opportunity for revenge, the first in a wave of legal cases against him. For Carlos, after four years in solitary confinement, the case is a long-awaited chance to take centre-stage, his preferred venue.

His lawyers say Carlos has been polishing his knowledge of the French language and legal system for months, and that he plans to conduct much of his defence in person. He will argue that his record is not that of a terrorist for hire, but the crusade of a revolutionary against Zionism and imperialism.

An extrovert who has spent much of his life in the shadows, Carlos is determined to take up every inch of his allotted limelight. His career

**The notorious  
terrorist will  
argue he was a  
crusader, writes  
Ben Macintyre**

has always seemed close to fiction — his soubriquet, after all, came from Frederick Forsyth's best-selling novel *The Day of the Jackal*.

The son of a wealthy Marxist lawyer who named him after Lenin, he is believed to have been trained in terrorism in Cuba. In his teens he went on to become the silk-shirt frequenter of nightclubs, radical defender of the Palestinian cause and, according to prosecutors, a ruthless international mass murderer.

The intense and heavy-lidded face familiar from mugshots of the 1970s has grown jowly and pallid in detention. The latest photograph shows a portly figure.

"He will fight like a tiger," Isabelle Coutant-Peyre, one of his small army of defence lawyers, said. "He gave his life to political struggle."

Carlos also took the lives of others, according to French prosecutors who blame him for the deaths of more than 80 people in a litany of terrorist

killings. The list of attacks attributed to him includes the 1973 shooting and wounding of Joseph Edward Sier, the Jewish president of Marks & Spencer; the seizure of Opec ministers in Vienna in 1975, in which three people died; and the 1976 hijacking of an Air France jetliner in Uganda which left 31 dead.

It was the less spectacular but still horrific killing in 1975 of two members of the French DST counter-intelligence service, who were investigating attacks on Israeli planes, that eventually led to his downfall.

Raymond Dous and Jean Donatini were allegedly shot by Carlos when they surprised him in Paris in 1975.

Over the ensuing 19 years, the French secret service pursued his trail until, in 1994, he was seized by Sudanese security agents after undergoing testicle surgery in Khartoum. According to some accounts,

The defence team is expected to argue that forcing Carlos to spend the last three

has infringed the European Convention on Human Rights. They will also maintain that he cannot be tried in

"He is delighted to have the chance to speak out in public," Mme Coutant-Peyre said.



**"Carlos the Jackal" in Khartoum before his capture in 1994 and, right, in an undated photograph in disguise**

## Ex-wife denounces a 'megalomaniac'

**Berlin:** The former wife of "Carlos the Jackal" says that he was a "megalomaniac madman" who killed without compunction.

Magdalena Kopp, in an interview in the German news magazine *Stern* published yesterday, said he "could kill people without batting an eyelid". She added: "Carlos wasn't on anybody's side except his own. I would really like to see the Carlos myth collapse."

Kopp, a former comrade-in-arms of the Venezuelan-born Carlos, lived with him and had his daughter. She was a member of the German far-left Red Army Faction.

and of the international group of terrorists that formed around Carlos in the 1970s and 1980s.

"Carlos was a real seducer. He knew how to charm a woman," she added from her new home in Ulm, southern Germany. She served three years in jail in France for possessing arms and explosives before rejoining him in Syria in 1985, where they were married.

When the hunt for him closed in, she fled first to Venezuela and then returned of her own accord to Germany in 1995.

cause the French authorities to pause. For all his bombast, Carlos had a unique insight into Cold War terrorism, including knowledge of other terrorist groups, and the countries that supported him and them. Terrorism experts say he may also still hold secret information, such as deals struck with Western governments in the 1980s, that could be used as bargaining chips. (AFP)

□ Caracas: The father of Carlos has insisted that his son was being held illegally. "France does not have the legal capacity to try Llich," Altagracia Ramirez Navas said. (AFP)



### Kopp: "he was a killer"

# Nuns sing their way into Italian charts

FROM RICHARD OWEN  
IN ROME

A GROUP of Italian nuns who normally lead a cloistered life of contemplation and avoid contact with the outside world have produced this year's surprise Christmas musical hit: a best-selling album of religious songs devoted to the Virgin Mary.

"Your record is selling as if we were rock stars," said Mother Maria Concetta, Mother Superior of the "Poor Clares" order at Albano Laziale, in the Alban hills near Rome. "But we are not faithful to our vows of simplicity." — Poor Clares

were founded by St Clare, the constant companion and devoted follower of St Francis of Assisi, who formed a "community of women dedicated to extreme poverty and austerity" in 1215. The order declined after her death in 1253, but was revived by St Colette at Besançon in the 15th century. It maintains convents in Italy, France and Belgium dedicated to "seclusion, holiness and solitude".

Mother Maria said the nuns at Albano had first formed a singing group in 1994, "at the instigation of some of our younger sisters. We had no thought of any commercial activity at the time." The group consists of 26 nuns, who sing to

guitar, piano and organ accompaniment. The Mother Superior said she believed the fact that pop fans were buying the *Songs for Mary* album was due to "the yearning for spirituality, and the appeal of songs sung from the heart by women full of love for God and Mary. We sing with spontaneity. We believe song is a fundamental component of prayer."

Mother Maria said the convent had been "inundated" with telephone calls from "enthusiastic young fans", some of whom had visited Albano to talk to the nuns in the convent parlour, the only room where vows of solitude could be "temporarily relaxed".

## Spa town still lauds Hitler

**Prague:** Adolf Hitler remains an honorary citizen of one of the Czech Republic's most famous spa towns, Karlovy Vary, the jewel of the German-populated Sudetenland that he annexed in 1938, a Czech newspaper reported yesterday. A town hall official, Zdenek Musil, was quoted as saying there were no plans to cancel the honour. Hitler's forces were welcomed when they occupied the region. (Reuters)

## Offbeat doctor treats stress with Mozart

**Rome:** An Italian doctor is pioneering a form of treatment for modern stress: 60 minutes of Mozart (Richard Owen writes). Dr Giovanni Spaggiari, of Reggio Emilia, in central Italy, is prescribing an hour-long "compilation CD" of Mozart themes along with Valium for "stressed-out men and women".

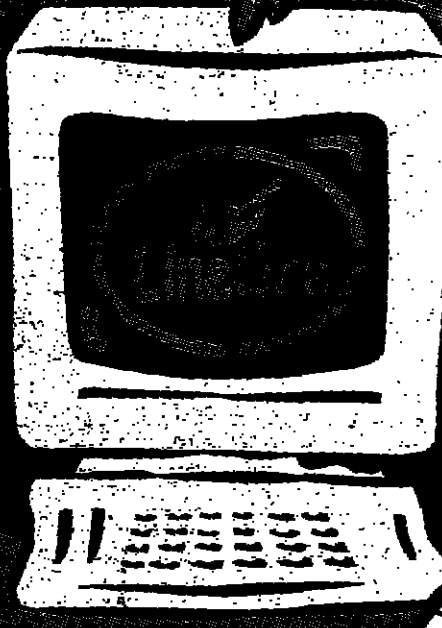
world and took many forms. He said he had been treating people for stress-related illnesses, including migraine and "anxiety attacks", for the past 15 years, not only by prescribing analgesics but also by playing his patients recorded harp and violin music in his surgery. He also favours natural

sounds such as bird cries but Mozart and Gregorian chants were "the most soothing".

Human rights groups praised Britain's new stance, attributing the policy switch to the arrival of the Labour Government and its "ethical foreign policy". One rights activist gave Elizabeth Wilmshurst, of the Foreign Office lawyer who is acting as Britain's chief negotiator, a human rights badge to congratulate her on changing her position.

"The British position is an important step forward in breaking ranks over the key issue of Security Council control of the court," said Jelena Pestic, of the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights.


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# More star dust than glam rock

CUTTING  
EDGE

JANE SHILLING

From the cover of this month's *Vogue*, the haughtily beautiful image of Stella Tennant stares out. Her shirt is embroidered in glitter thread and pearls. Beneath that menacing, ice-blue stare there is a moon-beam streak of silvery shadow. Across the surface of that perfect skin, a faint, iridescent sheen. This is how we would all like to look at Christmas — sparkling and slightly aloof. A look that, when you walk into a party, provokes a tiny, almost imperceptible pause in the conversation which, when it resumes after a beat of silence, is filled with murmurs of "Who is that girl?" Think Snow Queen. Think Queen of the Night. Whatever you do, don't think Freddy Mercury of Queen.

Those of us who lived through the years of glam rock can even now suffer moments of post-traumatic flashback if we are unexpectedly reminded of the things we used to get up to with glitter. They used to sell, in Woolworths, little pots of metallic powder in vibrant shades of violet and cyclamen, aquamarine and lime green. Did we really, as instructed by the teen magazines of the time, apply this stuff in concentric rainbow semi-circles from lashline to brow bone, and shape it into butterfly wings at the outer corners of our eyes? Yup. I am afraid we did. But we were very young in those days, and now we know better.

With judicious application it is perfectly possible to cover one's person in a childishly satisfying amount of sparkle while still avoiding a resemblance to the Queen at the State Opening of Parliament (an admirable look, of course, but unfortunately Her Majesty is the only person who is capable of carrying it off), or Barbara Windsor on her way to preside over a Girls' Nite In at the Queen Vic (also a perfectly good look in its way, but probably at its best when seen in its native habitat of Walford).

The secret of successful sparkle lies partly in one's choice of products, and partly

in a certain stealth of application. A blooming 15-year-old can survive a coating of glitter that would instantly reduce an older skin to a tone of greyish chalk. If one is much past 25, one may prefer to treat with scepticism *Elle* magazine's advice to "sweep Laura Mercier's glistening Star Dust Loose Powder all over the face and décolleté..." (If, when dressing for a party, you find yourself tempted to make the best of your cleavage's annual outing, and reach for the Star Dust after all, just consider Joan Collins, and desist.)

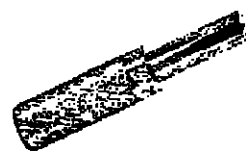
But Guerlain's Les Météorites — pretty little balls of faintly frosty ivory, rosy pink and pale gold — will lend the skin a generous glow, as though it were lit by candlelight. (Glitter make-up, it goes without saying, should shun the daylight as fervently as Count Dracula.)

If you haven't got a diamond for every finger, make up for it with frosted fingertips. Not pearlised or, heaven forbid, white — which will make your hands look as though you have spent all day doing dishes (you may well have done exactly that, but we are talking about illusion, after all) — but gold or silver. Urban Decay's Alley Cat (metallic blonde) or Stray Dog (steely grey) are cool enough to win grudging approval from even your hypercritical children.

Every Christmas produces its tempting little make-up gimmick. A couple of seasons ago, it was Chanel's gold-tipped eyelashes. Last year, there was Guerlain's metallic eyeliner, housed in a little silver flip-top case that looked as though Marie Antoinette's jeweller had been ordered to produce a Zippo lighter. This year it is Dior's thoroughly frivolous hair mascara: azure for black hair, a seaweed green for a mermaid look and a pale gold, encouragingly called Champagne, that works, as I have just this moment discovered, a miracle on a dishwasher blonde fringe.

## SIX OF THE BEST

Metallics are it this season. No self-respecting partygoer of any age should contemplate going out without applying at least one metallic make-up item first.



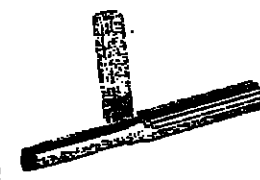
### SILVER MASCARA

**Face Stockholm**  
Silver came out more of a pale grey and was not as glittery as it looked in the bottle. Makes your eyelashes look white and is drier than normal mascara. Packaging is plain but chic. Value for money if you like the effect, which I didn't... 5/10  
Silver Mascara by Face Stockholm, £11 available exclusively at Liberty's, London W1.



### GOLD GLITTER GEL

**FS Face Stockholm**  
The gel is clear with glitter scattered throughout, the texture is fine, not at all sticky but smooth and light to apply. The packaging is beautiful — a small compact dish filled with sparkly gel... 10/10  
Gold Glitter Gel by FS Face Stockholm, £11 available exclusively at Liberty's, Regent Street, W1.



### GOLD LIPSTICK

**Estée Lauder**  
This really does make your lips look gold. I rather liked the slightly space-age effect but men were divided in their opinions. Lovely shiny gold packaging. Good value for money but not one to try out on a new boyfriend... 8/10  
Gold Indelible lipstick from Estée Lauder, £12.50 available at department stores nationwide.



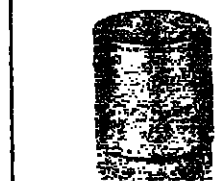
### GOLD EYESHADOW

**Nars**  
Pale rich gold looks less intense on lid than in the compact. It gives a smooth sheen. Expensive, but you are paying for the expertise of Francine Nars, make-up artist to the stars... 7/10  
Gold Finger Eye shadow by Nars, £12.50, available at Liberty's, Regent Street, W1, and Space NK, 307 Brompton Road, SW3.



### HAIR MASCARA

**Christian Dior**  
This works like mascara to give instant highlights. I tried opeline, which produces reasonably authentic golden highlights. Great for a party, though you are left with slightly sticky hair. Not bad value for money... 9/10  
Christian Dior hairwand, £13 at department stores nationwide.



### MERCURY NAIL VARNISH

**Club Monaco**  
A bit streaky in places, two coats definitely needed... 6/10  
Club Monaco metallic sheen nail varnish, £8 available from Selfridges, London, W1

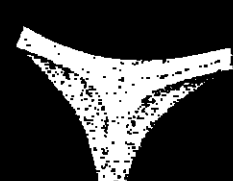
Compiled by  
DEBORAH BRETT

# Putting on the glitz



Party time: No self-respecting partygoer of any age should contemplate going out without applying at least one metallic make-up item

## HOT TIP



■ With hipsters continuing to be all the rage, VPL (Visible Panty Line) continues to pose a problem for the modern woman. What could be worse than unsightly bulging and knickerbands poking out above the waistband? Marks & Spencer has come to the rescue by inventing the hipster thong. It comes in black and white Tactel, which makes it super soft and a snap at £5 from selected branches nationwide.

## Objects of desire

■ Fake fur hot water bottle, £45 by La Maison De La Fausse Fourrure available at Fenwick's, New Bond Street W1. 0171-629 9161. This is the last word in true decadence. It comes not only in fake mink but also in leopard spots, tiger stripes and plush scarlet. It doubles as an adult cuddly toy and is perfect for keeping warm on chilly winter nights.

■ Red snakeskin stilettos, £225 by Gina. If the price seems too steep, try and hold on until December 20 when the sale starts with up to 60 per cent off until stocks last. Gina, 189 Sloane Street, London SW1, 0171-235 2932



# Mulberry

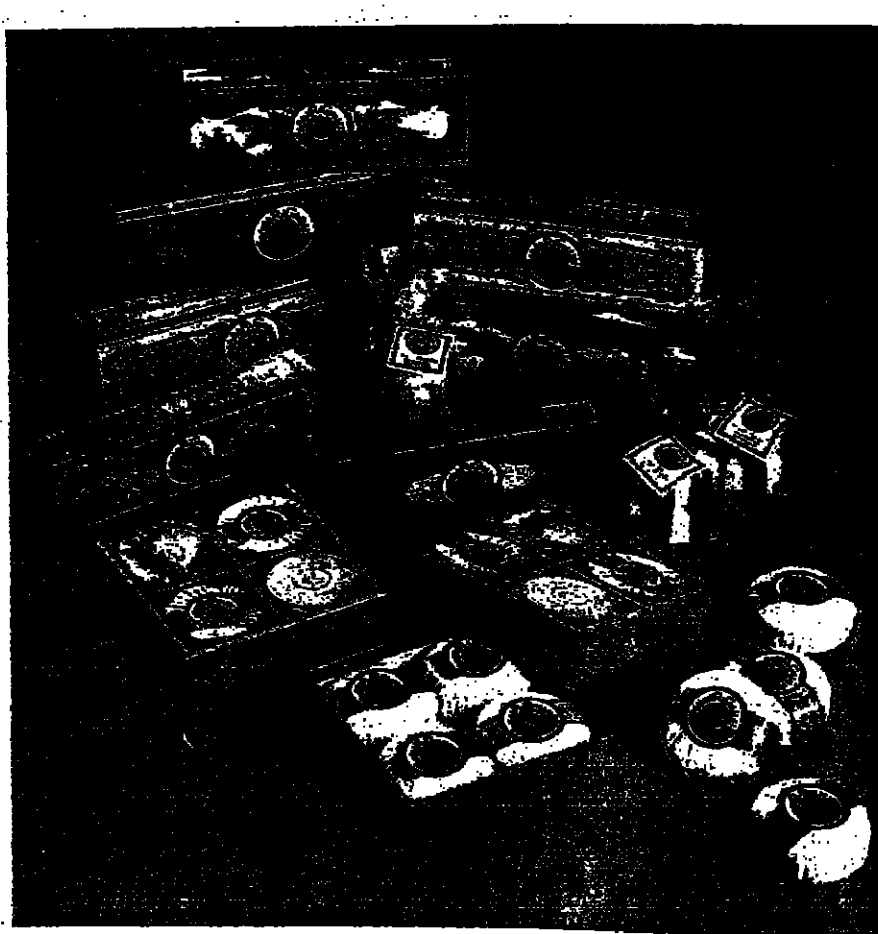


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Greyhound racing no longer has the image of rough old men standing around in the rain watching dogs in deserted stadiums. The facilities are as good as any of the top sporting venues

## Why we're going to the dogs

It is the lights that you see first, the neon glare drawing you through the drizzle of an East End night, and then the stadium itself the Stow, as the regulars call it, with its giant red-jacketed greyhound a luminous presence on the skyline. As the first race begins, the thin pop music stops, the lights dim and on the wind you can hear the yelping of the greyhounds as they wait to leave the trap.

There is a hush, then the dogs burst out, hurtling after a mechanical hare they will never catch. It's all over so quickly.

As the winning greyhound crosses the line, there are shouts (and groans) from the track-side punters. The dogs themselves run another circuit before slowing down, as if struck by the futility of the pursuit. The lights go on and the music starts again. This ritual is repeated 13 times during this Thursday night at Walthamstow Stadium — there is scarcely time enough to study the form between races — but the sense of expectation never diminishes.

Colin Randall, 33, is a professional librarian and a

regular punter. Standing next to him you cannot help but be swayed by his enthusiasm. He has his own elaborately idiosyncratic system of betting and knows exactly how much he can afford to lose on each race. "A night out at the dogs beats the stultifying deadness of sitting at home watching the National Lottery," he says, sipping a pint of lager.

He pauses, looks at the racecard and circles the name of the winning dog. Why does he pause? This is real life. If Dostoevsky were alive and living in Chingford, he'd be here. I've had some of the best nights I've ever had at the Stow. When there are good-class dogs running and a big crowd, it's magic.

Greyhound racing, after football, is the second biggest spectator sport in Britain. There are 34 licensed tracks (and many more unlicensed ones, quaintly known as "flapping" tracks); more than 70,000 races are run every year, watched by four million people. About £320 million is

spent on on-course betting and £1.7 billion in off-course betting shops.

To spend a night at the dogs is to return to a time of a mass common culture and gritty, open-air entertainment. Attendances at the tracks have shrunk dramatically since the high point of the immediate postwar years, when up to 80,000 people would watch a night's action at White City.

But the sport is experiencing a revival. There is renewed television interest, from Sky Sports and Live TV; a slow rise in attendances at stadiums substantially revamped for the corporate hospitality generation; and an interest in the dogs among the young and fashionable — Blur's album *Park Life* features a dog track on its cover, and Damon Albarn owns a greyhound.

The emergence of a superbly talented champion dog, Some Picture, which this season made history by winning the English and Scottish derbies, has further enhanced the sport. He is even quoted at 20-1

to win the BBC Sports Personality of the Year.

As Simon Marcantonio, of the National Greyhound Racing Board, which promotes the sport, says: "Greyhound racing has made a real attempt to shake off the image of rough old men standing around in the rain watching dogs run in deserted stadiums. The facilities are now as good as any of the top sporting venues; and, unlike horse racing, we don't have elitist policies."

Greyhound gossip turns on stories of elaborate scams, of a dog being fed lemonade or too much meat to hinder its performance before an important trial, thus lengthening its price for the next race when it is in peak condition; or of soft toys being thrown on to a track to sabotage a race.

"But," counters Bob Betts, greyhound editor of *The Sporting Life*, "these are isolated incidents. With any betting sport people will try to beat the system, but I think the sport is pretty clean. All the dogs are subjected to regular dope tests and the racing at all the licensed tracks is conducted under the strict rules of the National Greyhound Club."

Well, that's all right then. Greyhound racing was imported from the United States, where coursing was popular at the turn of the century. The first British race was held at Belle Vue, Manchester, in 1926, and the sport quickly acquired a mass following among the urban working class.

Yet the Greyhound Derby at White City was an event with a social standing comparable to that of the Lord's Test or the FA Cup final, as this journalistic account of the 1936 derby shows: "There were belted earls, young men fresh from

public school, officers and all ranks of the fighting forces in mufti, businessmen, labourers and indeed (keep it quiet) a sprinkling of clergy."

Back at Walthamstow, it is a windy and wet night. Most of the punters are inside, watching from the bars, restaurants and hospitality boxes. Buying a drink, I am introduced to dark-suited members of the Chandler family, who have owned the stadium since it was opened in 1932.

Frances Chandler, the octogenarian daughter-in-law of the late William Chandler, who acquired the property on which the stadium is built as a bare site of 14 acres, rests a hand on my arm. "I used to race them myself," she says. "I never took to the horses; they have to race with a man on their back. But my dogs run on their own." Her silver hair is scraped off her tanned face, and she is wearing a black sequined dress. She has a fierce glamour, but is friendly.

In front of her is a glass full of cigarettes; she chooses one, lights it. "We used to hold funerals for my greyhounds in my 20-acre garden in Epping. Contrary to what people say, they are the kindest, gentlest creatures. They are trained to chase a moving object but they would never hurt a child."

Does she regret the changes in the sport, the arrival of hospitality boxes and the suites full of City dealers and office parties? "You have to move with the times, as football has done. You can't resist the ways of the modern world."

Move outside and you understand the appeal of greyhound racing. Standing alongside the winning post

## Robert Maxwell is in my crib

The Christmas story always attracts passionate detail

In Naples, the late Princess of Wales has been promoted to the status of a crib figure. Reports tell us that statues of Diana are being sold by the thousands by the artisans of San addi cossacks on horseback, and the Peruvians build a drunken colourful party, with the child Jesus held perilously aloft like the World Cup.

The one which inspired my own modern version, though, is the traditional Provençal crib in which a whole village brings tribute to the crib: a scroll from the mayor, chickens from the poultryer, repentance from the brigand, and so forth. When an English model-maker offered to make an equivalent, I asked for the figures to be modern. The Cardboard City Crib, now in its tenth year, is set in a battered, painted scene of Charing Cross arches with the Baby in a cardboard box, his young mother a drop-out in jeans and his father in a dread-



LIBBY PURVES

locks. At first I commissioned portmanteau figures to visit it — the midwife in NHS blue, the businessman passing on the news by mobile phone, the school party, the policeman.

Gradually, though, some Neapolitan instinct made me start asking for figures from the year's news: often they were hate figures like Maxwell or people of controversy like Quentin Crisp in the year he did an alternative Queen's broadcast on Channel 4. The principle was, and is, that Christmas is no time to preserve enmities.

Sadly, I lost touch with the modelmaker Sue Dammann when she moved to France, so I have been unable to add an elegant teeny Mandelstein, or Cherie Blair with Humphrey at her heels, or a Fayed or a Kelvin MacKenzie. Perhaps a new modeller will come forward. Meanwhile, my experience is that people stare for longer, and more thoughtfully, into that crib than into any of the prettier and more exotic ones.

I have every sympathy for the Neapolitan Diana-holics, because if there is one thing the collection has taught me it is that the central Christmas story is so simple, powerful and universal that it will always attract passionate local and personal detail. Every climate and nation puts in its own conviction about how it might have been: the Tehuac Indians swaddle the baby tightly against the freezing Andean night, the

Romanians with peasant practicality divide up the manger so that there is still a section left for the cattle-feed, the Poles set the whole scene in vast ornate models of Cracow Cathedral and add cossacks on horseback, and the Peruvians build a drunken colourful party, with the child Jesus held perilously aloft like the World Cup.

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● Cribbs from the World in Norwich Cathedral from Dec 14 to 20, 9.30am-5pm, entry by donation to Christian Aid.

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# Adams has no business at No 10

But Blair must give peace his best shot, says John Lloyd

Terrorists spend their youth being hunted as criminals, their middle age being fêted as freedom fighters and their later years ruling as presidents. This beguiling formula is now being applied to Gerry Adams, the president of Sinn Féin and the Prime Minister's after-lunch guest in Downing Street yesterday. It surrounds Mr Adams in a glow of, if not yet respectability, at least inevitability. It is wrong.

Let us assume that Tony Blair knows this. It is more important that we, the British people (more than half of whom, on polling evidence, want to give Mr Adams what he wants, a united Ireland), understand why Mr Adams is not to be bracketed, as he dearly wishes, with Nelson Mandela. He is, to coin a phrase, himself alone.

The anti-colonial guerrillas whose hit-and-run irregulars were pursued by brutalised British, or French, or Portuguese troops across their colonies were part of an era of collapsing empires. The white settlers' descendants, bitterly awakening to the loss of their motherland's will to carry on oppressing, had to take what they could get, or get out with what they could take.

If there is a parallel between these figures and Ireland, it is with Michael Collins, the signatory to the treaty which created the Free State and the martyr to the bile of those who saw him sell out for 26 counties the ambition of all 32. Republicanism has kept this word carefully unstained; Earned de Valera's 1937 Irish Constitution laid up, in the irreverent Articles 2 and 3, an endless store of salt to rub into it down the decades.

The quarrel has kept its integrity yet, because of the dedication of men like Gerry Adams — trained to the gun, imbuing a morality whose transcendence goal is the realisation of the Irish nation's wholeness, to which end any means is good. Mr Blair is continuing, and accelerating, a policy of accommodating Mr Adams which has been on a fast track for a decade now.

Since the late 1980s, when John Hume of the Social Democratic and Labour Party began talks with Mr Adams to unite violent republicanism with his own peaceful and incremental nationalism, the following major concessions have been made. Britain has declared that it has no "selfish strategic or economic interest" in the province; opened a secret line of communication with the IRA; made a declaration, in 1993, that it was neutral between a united Ireland and a continuation of the Union; published, in 1995, a declaration with the Irish Government that a North-South body be created which gives Dublin a large purchase on the affairs of the province; and permitted Sinn Féin to continue talks without insisting on its decommissioning arms.

This has meant that Mr Adams is now seen as at least a credible political figure, not as a terrorist. He is in his middle-aged, fêted period. In 1942, the Sinn Féin leader's

father (also called Gerald and then aged 16) was jailed for shooting at a police officer. One of the other IRA men with whom he was jailed, Tom Williams, was later hanged for a separate incident in which a policeman was killed (although probably not by Williams). His son, who was part of a group which nearly killed both Margaret Thatcher and John Major, is welcomed into 10 Downing Street by the Prime Minister, complains that he cannot take his parliamentary seat and is wooed into television studios.

This, to those who recall the carnage which he has encouraged and excused, is stuff on which to gag. It can be lived with only if, after all the meetings and the talks, Gerry Adams, with Martin McGuinness and the rest of the IRA/Sinn Féin leadership, can commit his followers to accept an outcome to the talks which will not bring a united Ireland in the immediate future.

He cannot get Irish unity. Indeed, he and John Hume move in a direction which conflicts with the slow, erratic movement in the Republic away from an insistence on the fulfilment of de Valera's imperative. It is full of contradictions — the vote for President Mary McAleese, a radical nationalist, happens at the same time as the new premier, Bertie Ahern, expresses his willingness to excise articles 2 and 3 from the constitution. But it seems the trend is clear.

He cannot get it — because the mystic old claim is a horror. Had there not been partition in 1920-22, the civil war would have convulsed the island; Ireland's independence from Britain was possible only because Ulster was quarantined.

Even now — as Dr Garret FitzGerald, the former Irish premier, has written — there is no serious thought given to what having a North-South body, let alone absorbing Ulster, would mean.

The division of the island will continue — as it should, since there is no agreement in the North that the Republic should take over, and the Republic's claim for suzerainty is likely to be worthless if tested in international law.

The Irish political class must, if the wound is finally to be staunch, let the Unionist settlement which is the only possible outcome of the talks really be a settlement, and not treat it as a series of concessions on which to build more as soon as politically practicable.

Gerry Adams, the leader of the body which will arouse a twinge of guilt in that political class, could do a great thing by committing many of his troops as he can to respect a settlement with which he cannot agree. Do you think he will? Neither do I. But it is reasonable for a Prime Minister committed to dialogue to give it his best shot. If it fails, then Mr Adams and the IRA must be taken on. Their cause is not just; it is simply murderous.

John Lloyd is associate editor of the New Statesman.



"NOT FAR NOW — IT'S WITHIN STRIKING DISTANCE"

## Uncharitable thoughts

There are many fat cats with tax breaks — and the greatest of these are the charities

Imagine there existed on these islands a state within the State. Let us call it Volsec. Imagine its gross domestic product was £18 billion — bigger than that of Wales. The citizens of Volsec number more than half a million souls, their average income well above that of the United Kingdom as a whole. Imagine, too, that a quarter of the revenue of this state comes from the UK exchequer — the proportion growing fast and risen by more than 50 per cent in the past four years.

Suppose that all businesses trading within Volsec are exempt from corporation tax. Add to that a massive percentage relief on business rates and a general exemption from the rigours of the Companies Act, and you will see that this state's internal economy enjoys a huge artificial advantage. The relief from British taxation which Volsec enjoys amounts to nearly £2 billion a year.

The inequality looms larger when we learn that Volsec is by no means a self-contained republic. Its commercial institutions have branches throughout Britain and trade alongside our own, competing on the high street and in the trading estate. Volsec operates more than 5,000 shops here — their number swelled by nearly half in the past 50 years and enjoying nearly £500 million of tax relief last year. That such featherbedded businesses are being operated in a lamentably uncommercial manner infuriates the thousands of small businesses in Britain, which enjoy no such advantages and are being crushed by the unfair competition.

Nor does Volsec spawn only retailers. In the service and contracting sector, too, its tax-cooched businesses elbow aside ordinary British rivals for the provision of many services. Volsec's investments are vast and growing. A fifth of its national income comes from dividends, interest and rents; the total value of its investments is some £27 billion; and the net value of Volsec's assets approaches £40 billion. The favourable tax regime applied there boosts the value of Volsec's investment income by a quarter.

As you would imagine, many of the citizens of Volsec are doing rather well. Last year the average salary of the directors of Volsec's 100 top businesses was £75,000. Many are paid more than £100,000 and one or two almost twice that. Salaries for chief executives in these larger concerns rose by 18 per cent last year. Volsec is not an imaginary state.

She exists here, as I have described her. Nor is she a new republic. Volsec's constitution finds its origins in 1601. In rudimentary form, the outlines of modern Volsec were already discernible more than three centuries ago.

You, reader, are contributing to her economy. You contribute by choice — and by her default on the taxes you cannot avoid. For "Volsec" read "British Registered Charity": the bulk of the voluntary sector.

Except that it isn't. It isn't voluntary. The 620,000 employees of the "voluntary" sector are just that: employees. Many of them may be deeply public-spirited, but so are many bus conductors and newsmen. Though a far larger number of citizens help out unpaid in large or small ways, the backbone of a modern charity's operation is composed necessarily of paid professionals in a sector with attractive employment opportunities and a recognisable career structure. A modern charity employee moves with ease from Aids to disability to pandas. One of Britain's 42,000 professional charity fundraisers — a mushrooming career option since the National Lottery started demanding "matching funding" — slides effortlessly from the Arts to the elderly to public school badminton courts.

And it isn't, for the most part, charitable. About two thirds of the charitable sector's revenue comes from non-charitable sources. Only one sixth of British charities' total revenue now comes from private giving. Add together private giving, corporate donations and legacies and you struggle just past one third of total revenue. Nearly as much comes from Government.

The biggest source of income for British charities is the fees they charge — such as admission tickets, contracts with local government and lettings. These amount to nearly £4 billion a year. Charities use the "volunteer" image as a marketing stance, but many now work in the welfare market, a cut-throat sector to which vast sums are allocated.

Then there is the retail market. Though an average of 73p in the

pound is absorbed in running costs and salaries, charity shops paying tiny business rates, or none, can outbid struggling commercial retailers for short leases; some are now selling new stock as well as second-hand goods, and moving from jumble into niche marketing.

Where they offer direct competition to the private sector, charities can rely on large fiscal advantages — while tugging at the customers' heart-strings. Where they have no direct competition (as in, for instance, ownership of heritage sites), a charity can exploit its monopoly in ways we would regard as disgraceful were a capitalist profiteer the culprit. Nor are these profits all ploughed back into the declared aims of the charity. One charity has spread £2 million over its staff in interest-free loans.

Let us delineate the charity landscape with more precision. Many people suppose — I did — that Britain's 184,000 charities were spread quite evenly along the range from small to large. Anything but. Less than one tenth of 1 per cent of British charity attracts 40 per cent of all charity revenue. There are in Britain a bunch of hulking great charities, and more than 100,000 virtually insignificant ones. 10 per cent of charities account for 90 per cent of the sector's income. 70 per cent account for less than 2 per cent of all revenue.

If you find figures abstract, consider the picture in words. Most charities are very small organisations which do display the characteristics of voluntarism who associate with the word "charity". But in their take on available funds, these are to the great hulks what a flea-bite is to a blood donor campaign. The hulks, trapped by their size but trading on the image of voluntarism painted in our minds by tiny charities, behave like the big businesses they are — except that they enjoy corporate privileges and a public tolerance and goodwill no other big business can command. Selling themselves through a philanthropic corporate identity which was probably a travesty even in Victorian times, the hulks depend

less and less upon the philanthropy either of their workers or of their donors. Household donations have dropped in recent years, while donations from the young are falling fast. Explanations can only be speculative, but may include a dawning public understanding of the nature of the beast. Among the public, charities now inspire only half as much confidence as the Royal Mail.

Many of the top British charities are not organisations that people would think of as good causes: The Wellcome Trust, the Arts Council and public schools are charitable. So is the College of Law. And some famous good causes are not in fact charities — Greenpeace and Amnesty International among them. Self-help organisations, particularly small ones, usually fail to qualify.

The whole thing is a conceptual and administrative mess. The solution may be to avoid an unpopular head-on challenge but to snip and undermine — which is broadly what the Treasury wants to do. Gordon Brown's decision to abolish advance corporation tax will cost the sector about £280 million a year and a review of charity taxation is underway. But nine heads of charities joined the Labour benches on May 1, and the Government has made it clear that the special tax status of charities is inviolate.

I favour a braver approach. We should sweep away charitable status completely. I put this idea to the Adam Smith Institute, who told me they had done little work on such proposals. They, too, were a charity! But every tax exemption is revenue forgone — and thus indirectly funded by you and me. We fund the Adam Smith Institute and the College of Law. Polly Toynbee has said that "if old ladies want to leave money to cats, I do not want to be party to that lunatic transaction by being forced to add to their donations through tax relief taken from my pocket".

I doubt, though, whether we shall ever find satisfactory definitions of who, what, when and why we wish to foster through tax exemption. Let us cleave to a simpler principle: that each citizen and every business pays tax upon principles of accountability which do not try to distinguish between the relative worthiness of the aims of the endeavour.

For why should it matter if we tax the worthy? Taxation is itself worthy. To abolish charitable status helps to spread fairly across the nation the burden of supporting the greatest charity of all: the Treasury.

Matthew Parris

Philip Howard



Yo-ho-ho, from Robinson Croesus to Treasury Island

Buried treasure is one of the ten basic building blocks of fiction. This topic goes back to the beginning of literature, with the discovery of hoards of silver plate and the netting of fishes that have swallowed gold rings. The dream of becoming fabulously rich without having to work for it, the secret plans, the lucky dig, exotic travel and the threat of piratical rival treasure-hunters are parts of the archetypal treasure story. And *Treasure Island* is its most enduring modern example.

Even in 1883 Stevenson worried whether the genre was old-fashioned. In a (poor) introductory poem to the hesitating purchaser, he wondered if studious modern youth had grown beyond his ancient appetites for the treasure adventure. If Kingston, or Ballantine the brave, or Cooper of the wood and wave are no longer on the bestseller lists, "So, be it, also! And may I/ And all my pirates share the grave/ Where these and their creations lie!" Fear not, *Treasure Island* is still as sea-worthy, as can be seen from the success of the National Lottery and the genre of fantasy treasure hunts started by films such as *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and *Jurassic Park*.

It merely needs to be updated to bring it on message for the new People's treasure story. For example, pieces of eight and gold doubloons no longer have the resonance they once did. Nor do the "strange oriental pieces stamped with what looked like a spider's web" in Ben Gunn's treasure cave. Try cashing those at the supermarket. They do not appear on the carousel carrying instant new wealth at the end of *The Generation Game* along with the cocktail trolleys and alarm-clocks that also make tea. A £125 million celebrity cheque blown up to the size of a door is what makes the punters "Oooh!" with envy these days.

Package tours have replaced the schooner *Hesperia*, and so scattered the mystery of the *Treasure Islands* of the world. But tax havens in Guernsey or the Cayman Islands sound as mysteriously exotic to most people, and the accountants' documentation to set them up is more secretive than Captain Billy's tattered map with "The Spyglass" hill in its centre. Rum is still a daring tipple in clubs, especially when mixed with Coke. But the captain's eternal song will have to be made over by spin-Dr Livesey from Saargh, along the lines of "Tis the Season to Bacardi".

Blindness is a metaphor for the search for hidden treasure. Blind Pew tap-tapping his way through the fog towards the *Admiral Benbow* is a gripping beginning for a rattling good yarn of avarice. In the People's *Treasure Island*, blind trusts are as strange and sinister as the great green shade over his eyes and nose. In the genre of treasure story, the heroes should have common English names such as Jim Hawkins or Geoffrey Robinson. If women are admitted, they play supportive roles, encouraging the treasure-seekers or holding a pearl necklace. But it helps if they have exotic names suggesting mystery and treasure, such as the fascinating Belgian widow of vast wealth and a certain age, Mme Joska Bourgeois. It is a brilliant touch that she is now beyond interview. Long John Silver's name signals his ruling characteristic as punningly as Dickens did with his names.

So a Geoffrey may become as familiar a name for tax-free offshore trusts in treasure islands such as Guernsey or Bermuda as Tessa and Peps once were in less exotic settings. Stir into the brew villas in Chianti, memories of such notorious pirates as Captain Flint or Cap'n Bob, and villainous lawyers uttering horrid threats, and you have a *Treasure Island* for new Britain.

And like all adventure yarns, the reader is not going to put it down until the plot is unravelled, and the secrets of the hidden treasure are revealed. It is no use for dear, silly Squire Trelawney to go on television to say that it is not at all clear that a tax haven is buried treasure. Once the hunt has started, we wish to know the end. But the new version will not play as well as the Mermaid in the original. Writs from Carter-Ruck and his sort are not so much fun for small boys to fence with as plastic cutlasses. Obsession is less of a prop than a parrot. But this is a treasure story that will run and run at the National.

## Ducking out

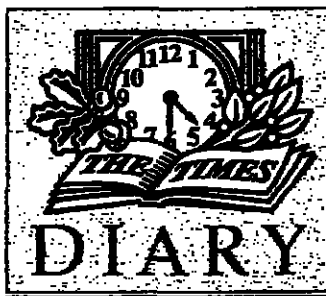
WITH his delicate voice and neat suits, Alan Duncan delights in appearing on television with a view to boosting the Tories' rather modest popularity. So Angus Deayton, the presenter of *Have I Got News For You*, invited him to appear on his show with Paul Merton and Ian Hislop for the current series. He believes that the Conservative vice-chairman agreed. But although tonight's episode is the last recording in the series, Duncan has consistently pleaded work commitments. Even after he was ushered sideways recently as William Hague's chief of staff, he was still too busy. It is not hard to work out why Duncan, a bright chap, might have been reluctant to appear. Even those old terrars Piers Morgan and Paula Yates were mauled on the show.

"We always like somebody who has plenty to say for himself," says a source close to Deayton. "So we rang Mr Duncan at the beginning of the series and his office said he would do it. We kept a slot open and repeatedly rang his office." Duncan now insists: "I have not accepted any invitation." But Claire Gagneux, his Westminster typist, says: "He did say he would like to appear but specified no date." I trust that dear Duncan will be treated with more respect than the then Roy Hattersley, who also once failed to show, he was replaced by a tub of lard.



Duncan and Deayton

●RELATIONS between Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare, the favourite to be London's first Lord Mayor, and Michael Crick, are cool. Archer was lined up to appear on BBC's *Newsnight* to talk about politicians' memoirs. Then he discovered that he was to be interviewed by Crick, his unauthorised biographer. According to a BBC source, Jeffrey was cross and rang to complain. He is



even said to have invoked the name of John Birt. "I did ring up," Jeffrey admits. "But I have not talked about this to John. I saw him the other evening but I have better things to talk about." The BBC was minded to drop Crick — until he complained. And Jeffrey's final words to the BBC? "I bet I end up reading about this in *The Times Diary*."

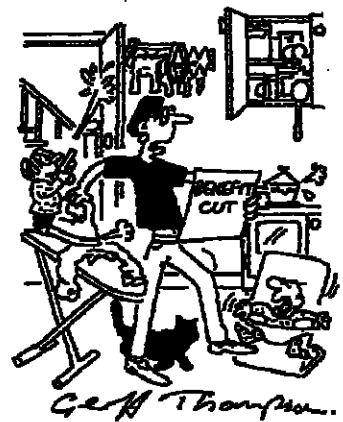
### Living dead

THE black arts of Peter Mandelson are disturbing Ken Livingstone. The rebel MP awoke, having voted against benefit cuts, to news that he might be singled out for especially gruesome punishment. Suspension was mooted, which could endanger his NEC

seat. "I'm in dead schtick," says Ken. "My plan will be inherited by the person below me in the poll." That was Mandelson. Surely Ken wouldn't accuse Peter of engineering his suspension? "I thought something was up when I heard the news. But I'm not cynical about my honoured colleagues."

### Absent friends

CONVENIENTLY for some left-wingers, pressing business forced them abroad for Wednesday's lone



"Things can only get better"

parents vote, saving them that awkward choice: ideal or career. Take my good friend Bob Marshall-Andrews, QC, who recently attacked "policies which will render destitute the most wretched". He was in Hong Kong, doing a few days' advocacy. Oddly, Nick Brown, Chief Whip, had no objections. Then there is the engaging new MP Oona King. A fortnight ago she told Harriet Harman: "Even a pound makes a difference." Again, the whips rather leniently approved an extended fact-finding trip to Bangladesh. "She will be back before Christmas," I am told, rather vaguely.

### Packet man

AFTER talk of a £10 million advance, Elton John has abandoned writing a memoir — as he has not been offered enough money. Publishers went into a frenzy at Frankfurt. The deaths of his friends Diana and Gianni had made him contemplative (or, as one publisher put it, "infinitely more promotable"). But the most they could muster was a modest £3.5 million. Elton wanted £7.5 million, a suggestion "respectfully declined" by HarperCollins and others. So David Chalfont, his literary agent,



Elton: lost match to publishers

was told yesterday to take it off the market. He had promised a "reflective and introspective" account (ie, lots of sex) making it "one of the biographies of the decade". Another decade, perhaps.

●A POTENT guest beer served in Strangers Bar fortified MPs voting against the Government. Its name? "Rebellion".

JASPER GERARD

سكنا من النظم





## REBELS WITH A CAUSE

Blair needs stronger ground for his next confrontation

A Government that prided itself on control and discipline lost both on Wednesday night. In the vote on lone-parent benefits, 47 Labour MPs rebelled and a further 14 actively abstained, a result far worse than the whips had anticipated. Harriet Harman, the Social Security Secretary, was left unsupported to face the onslaught. No Cabinet minister thought fit to join her and, while MPs bewailed the poverty of lone mothers, the Prime Minister entertained media stars at No 10.

The Chief Whip was wise yesterday to draw back from confrontation with most of the rebels. Had the Government been wholly in the right, had this been a straight fight between old and new Labour, he could have cracked down. But many in the country have found the Government's arguments on this issue unconvincing, particularly since the benefit cut will act as a deterrent to taking a job. Most of the rebels were making mischief, but others genuinely could not bring themselves to vote for a measure that seemed so misconceived. Usually, when Tony Blair has taken on the Left, he has won popular support. This time, he would be on marshier ground.

If relations with the rebels are bad, they are little better with the loyal MPs who supported Ms Harman against their better judgment. The rebels can at least feel comfortable justifying their position to their family, friends and constituents. Those who toed the government line while hating themselves for doing so have no such ease of explanation. They will feel that Mr Blair now owes them a favour.

Unfortunately for the Prime Minister, he has many more to call in from them. This move on lone-parent benefit is just the first of many in a bold plan for welfare reform. Mr Blair made a mistake by starting with a cut that was inherited rather than justified by

his own lights. Future reforms, such as the taxation or means-testing of disability benefits, are far more sensible measures. Unfortunately, the lone-parent row will cast its long shadow over other reforms. Rebels will be emboldened to vote against loyalists will be the more embittered.

Yet Mr Blair must not row back now. His rebels may wobble, but they cannot kill. Many radical policies have been postponed to a second term; welfare reform, however, needs the cushion of a huge majority. Over the next four years, the Prime Minister can achieve much. He will have to leave it to the electorate to judge whether the reforms achieved outweigh the divisions exposed.

The balance should work in his favour. On Margaret Thatcher's precedent, voters seem to prefer strong leadership tackling formerly intractable issues, even if a minority of the governing party finds the approach hard to stomach. The alternative — weak direction and an obsession with party management — was comprehensively rejected at the last election.

Next time, Ms Harman will be able to marshal better arguments. Then the clash really will be between old Labour and new. If those reprimanded this week offend again, Mr Blair and his whips will have to take tougher action. Otherwise, his troops will learn the habit of rebellion and, on a narrower majority, they could wreak havoc.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister will have to protect his flank more carefully. Ms Harman, although brave and genuinely prepared to think the unthinkable, may not be the best minister to persuade her colleagues to think it too. She should stay in post to prepare the reforms. But when it comes to taking them through Parliament, she could perhaps be moved to a different job to allow a more popular minister to steer welfare reform past a recalcitrant party.

## THE CLIMATE IN THE SENATE

A pause to reconsider global warming — courtesy of the USA

After 11 days of deliberation and an intense 48-hour session of final negotiations, the cast of thousands assembled in Kyoto approved a treaty to reduce global greenhouse gases. This blueprint mandates that emissions should be cut by an average of 5.2 per cent from 1990 levels within the next 15 years. The European Union should reduce its output by 8 per cent, the United States by 7 per cent and Japan by 6 per cent. The pact was acclaimed by those who had adopted it as a significant first step: it was bitterly condemned by environmentalists and industrialists. Most diplomats were relieved that a deal of any sort was struck and that a breakdown between the European Union and United States had been prevented.

In all probability this is a dispute deferred. Although Vice-President Albert Gore — a man long associated with this issue — hailed the accord as a "vital turning point" and President Clinton showed similar enthusiasm, it is unlikely that the US Senate will agree with them. That will be clear when the UN convenes again next year in Argentina.

The United States has long had an exceptionally diverse and politically effective environmental movement within its own borders. Many American states have passed measures on clean air and pure water that are among the toughest laws in the world. The problems of pollution and the challenge of conservation have, however, been home-grown matters. Canada has been too clean and Mexico, until very recently, too under-developed, to add a transnational dimension to American policy. Warnings on global warming have not yet altered this attitude.

The details have sealed this treaty's fate. The Clinton Administration needed to convince Congress on two matters: first, that

a credible system of tradeable permits would be created that encouraged American companies to buy and sell the right to pollute; secondly, that developing nations would also commit themselves to meaningful action on emissions. In July, the Senate passed, on a 95-0 vote, a motion making that linkage explicit. As it is, the Kyoto framework retains the principle of permits but with little practical detail and has failed to place obligations on rapidly emerging economies such as China and India.

American corporations and trade unions alike have condemned the Kyoto conference, spending \$13 million on advertisements before the politicians and bureaucrats even reached Japan. Most Republicans instinctively distrust regulation of this sort and are deeply suspicious of crusades associated with Mr Gore, a certain presidential contender in 2000. Many Democrats, who might otherwise sympathise with climate control, will not risk alienating their constituents with congressional elections next year. The Senate will not ratify this treaty. Mr Clinton knows that Mr Gore conceded yesterday that the document would not be submitted to the Senate unless key developing nations "voluntarily" agreed to mandatory limits on their pollution.

This does not mean that the international process will end or that carbon dioxide will be produced in uncontrolled quantities. There will be the opportunity for further deliberations. It does, however, suggest that those who favour dramatic action will have to make their case more powerfully still and look beyond politicians and United Nations initiatives. That may be — courtesy of the US Senate — the single most important message to emerge from the Kyoto conference.

## FORKED TONGUES

Gerry Adams' Gaelic words send false signals

Whatever words may have passed between Gerry Adams and Tony Blair inside 10 Downing Street yesterday will not have had the impact on the viewing public which Mr Adams' words outside enjoyed. The climax for Mr Adams in a day of distasteful theatrical contrivance was his studied use of Irish in the Downing Street doorway in answer to a journalist's question. Deliberately ignoring an inquiry in English, Mr Adams sought out a figure in the crowd who addressed the Sinn Féin leader in Gaelic. Mr Adams' choice of language will have been as carefully choreographed as his choice of overcoat "from a well-wisher" or his manner of preparation for the meeting, the stately procession down Whitehall. Every minute of Mr Adams' day has been exploited, every gesture calculated, to convey a particular, and wholly deceitful, impression.

The ambassadorial overcoat, motorcade, bodyguards and, most of all, the tongue which sounds so odd to British ears are all designed to suggest that Mr Adams is the representative of a foreign people come to talk peace and negotiate colonial withdrawal. Mr Adams wants the British public to believe he is a modern Nujomo or a Gaelic Mandela, a reluctant fighter crying freedom in a foreign tongue. He is, of course, nothing of the kind. He heads a movement designed not to secure freedom and democracy but stifle it.

His use of Irish, like his use of violence, is another act of cynical calculation to advance

his aim of denying Ulster's democratic majority its rights. When the commander of the IRA's Belfast brigade issued orders to kill he did not do so in the language of Cuchulainn but the brutal urban English of a Leninist warlord. The Irish language is a minority tongue in the Republic and thrives at all North or South of the border, only thanks to state support. It is as much a historic language of the British Isles as Cornish, Welsh or Lallans. It is, however, no more the authentic language of working-class Ulster in which Sinn Féin surgeries are conducted and benefit forms filled in than Latin is the lingua franca of Whitehall.

Mr Blair may have felt that the words Mr Adams uttered inside his home have brought peace closer. That is a judgment he must be allowed in the privacy of that home, so recently itself an IRA target. What is certain is that his invitation allowed Mr Adams the chance to project an image to the world which does democracy no service. The welcome to Sinn Féin was issued on the basis it should be treated like every other party in the talks on Northern Ireland's future. Yet Mr Adams and his colleagues exploited the occasion to send exactly the opposite message. They wished to be seen not as a political party representing a part of the United Kingdom's population trying to improve its government but a foreign delegation seeking an end to occupation. It is a pity that a Government so skilled in presentation should have allowed democracy's doorstep to be so ill-used.

## Use of party whips 'undemocratic'

From Mr E. B. Shaxson

Sir, Surely the time has come to question the undemocratic powers wielded by the party whips, following the unedifying examples of the previous Government, in forcing many Members to avoid their perceived responsibilities — in this instance towards single mothers (reports, December 11, leading article, December 10).

Malcolm Chisholm, the Scottish Office Minister who resigned his portfolio over the current issue, together with some 46 Labour "rebels", are upholding the best traditions of our Westminster system and, whatever our political persuasions, we owe them gratitude for their courage and conviction.

The next vulnerable groups to be assailed are the disabled and pensioners — they will need the support of courageous Members too.

Yours etc,  
BRUCE SHAXSON,  
8 Oakhurst, Grayshott GU26 6JW,  
December 11.

From Mrs Fiona H. House

Sir, In the early days of Labour's election success, the Prime Minister said: "The people are the masters. We are the servants of the people. We will never forget that."

In a democracy, the will of the people is exercised through their representatives in Parliament. The executive, in order to serve the people, must subject itself to the will of Parliament. It may have become the habit, but it is constitutionally corrupt for the Government to seek, by threat and bullying, to exert its will over the will of the people's representatives. Where it cannot persuade, it should submit.

Yours faithfully,  
F. H. HOUSE,  
23 King Edward's Road,  
Ware SG12 7EJ,  
December 11.

From Mr Richard Bristow

Sir, I wonder how many votes would have been cast against the Government last night on benefits for single mothers if there were a secret system of voting, instead of the open ballot system which presently exists.

Perhaps we should try out secret ballots in the House of Commons before we spend too much time and money on studying other electoral voting systems.

Yours faithfully,  
RICHARD BRISTOW,  
11 Harpsden Way, NW11 7JE,  
December 11.

From Ms Nicola Thorne

Sir, How ironic it is that on the very day Parliament voted to lower the lone-parent benefit, Tony Blair hosted a glittering party in Downing Street for grinning showbiz personalities. Apparently the new Government has now spent more on parties than the amount to be taken away next year from new claimants for lone-parent benefit.

At one time it seemed impossible to envisage a Tory election victory in another four to five years. Now it looks more likely.

Yours faithfully,  
NICOLA THORNE,  
South Bank (North), Church Street,  
Sturminster Newton DT10 1DB,  
December 11.

## Neighbours at odds

From Mr Steven R. Laidlaw

Sir, Magnus Linklater ("You're in a minority, Mr Stewart," December 4) must have moved in rather limited circles in Scotland if he has "not realised" the strength of anti-English feeling here, and the consequent necessity for legislation to crack down on overt hostility towards ethnic minorities — the English in particular.

The reason for this hostility is, of course, rooted in the histories of both England and Scotland. However, I would hope Mr Linklater can see the logical answer to the current animosity: independence for Scotland. Then both nations may exist as neighbours, not as landlord and tenant.

Yours faithfully,  
STEVEN R. LAIDLAW,  
27 Harrington Place,  
Edinburgh EH10 4LF,  
December 4.

From Mrs M. A. Burton

Sir, In 1989 I was harangued for being English, for four hours at a stretch, by the owner of the croft on North Uist in which I was staying for a holiday. As a result, I have spent my recent holidays in East Africa, where the natives are more friendly.

Legislation may well be necessary to protect those who have to live with such prejudice, but why is this not covered by the existing law on racial discrimination?

Yours faithfully,  
M. A. BURTON,  
Rectory Farm, 1 Cambridge Square,  
Alderton, Tewkesbury GL20 8NW,  
December 4.

Business letters, page 31

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046 — e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

## Demise of the doorstep welcomed

From Mr Jamie Borwick

Sir, I was surprised to read the claim from the House-Builders' Federation that the enforcement of "visitability" requirements, such as the absence of doorsteps (report, December 5), would add £1,000 to the cost of the average two-bedroom house, pricing many first-time buyers out of the market.

My company is presently discussing, with the help of the local planners, the commercial development of 318 houses in Runnymede, Surrey. These will incorporate not only the level-entry requirements which the Construction Minister is to impose from April 1999 but 15 other requirements set by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's standards for "lifetime homes". We believe this will be the first prototype development of this sort of house in the private housing field. They will be sold at the same price as any other new housing development.

In the light of the Government's recent announcement that 4.4 million new homes will have to be built in the next 20 years, it cannot be premature to ensure that new housing is accessible to people from across the community at the earliest opportunity.

The reality is that building in such requirements at source is economically sound. We should grasp this important opportunity to provide the equality of access which our ageing population demands, rather than paying the higher cost later by failing to think before we build.

Yours sincerely,  
JAMIE BORWICK  
(Managing Director),  
Love Lane Investments Ltd,  
1 Love Lane, EC2V 7JJ,  
December 5.

From Ms Ginnie Shaw  
and Mr Charlie Dixon

Sir, Joking aside, how many people will seriously miss the front doorstep? All sorts of people will gain from the Government's anticipated extension of accessibility requirements to all

new residential accommodation.

The changes will not only improve the lives of older and disabled people, as your report suggests, parents with buggies, cyclists, people of all ages recovering from illness or accident, in fact the majority of us will benefit.

Furthermore, it is simply not true that there are no "failsafe technical solutions" to keep the rain out, as alleged by the Chief Executive of the House-Builders' Federation. Housing associations have been successfully building level thresholds for a number of years, even in areas with extreme weather conditions.

Of course, the inaccessibility of our existing homes will continue to be a problem and may require expensive adaptations for years to come. But at least the 150,000 homes built each year from 1999 will save us all money in the longer term, as well as being safer and more comfortable places to live in.

Yours faithfully,  
GINNIE SHAW  
(Director, National Disabled Persons Housing Service),  
CHARLIE DIXON  
(Assistant Director, RNIB Housing and Environmental Services),  
RNIB Housing Service,  
Garrow House,  
190 Kensal Road, W10 5BT,  
December 5.

From Dr Patricia Pay

Sir, If those who pour scorn on the Construction Minister's proposals, had known what it is, as I have for more than twenty years, to find yourself marooned at the doorway of a building you needed to enter, or totally unable to visit friends because of an entrance step and no downstairs loo, they would doubtless welcome these desperately needed changes to the building regulations as a giant leap in the right direction.

Yours faithfully,  
P. PAY,  
Longmeadow House,  
Dunsford, Exeter EX6 7AD,  
December 5.

## Anti-depressant drugs

From Professor George Beaumont

Sir, I am alarmed and disturbed by Mr Charles Medawar's findings on the addictive qualities of anti-depressant drugs, published in *The International Journal of Risk & Safety in Medicine* (report, December 4).

During the 40 years that anti-depressants have been available, there has been no convincing evidence, despite extensive worldwide use, that they could be regarded as drugs of addiction. It is true that withdrawal effects can, sometimes, be seen on cessation of all anti-depressant regimes; but these effects, which are invariably short-lived, can be explained pharmacologically. Similar mechanisms apply when a variety of other drugs not regarded as addictive are withdrawn. They can be avoided or controlled by good clinical practice.

Mr Medawar is wrong to suggest that all anti-depressants are essentially the same. Although their efficacy in relieving the core symptoms of major

depression is similar, there are big differences in side-effect profile, behavioural toxicity and toxicity in overdose. Their pharmacological actions also differ and this is important in managing the range of conditions, especially anxiety, with which depression is so often allied.

Depression is one of the most common disorders that afflict mankind. It causes substantial suffering and disability. It has a significant mortality and creates an enormous economic burden. It is, however, eminently and relatively simply treatable with modern antidepressants, provided they are administered properly.

The sort of comments made in Mr Medawar's report unnecessarily undermine public confidence in antidepressants, which should be used more extensively, not less.

Yours faithfully,  
GEORGE BEAUMONT,  
11 Dorchester Road,  
Hazel Grove, Stockport SK7 5HE,  
December 5.

## Wolsey invoked

From Admiral of the Fleet Lord Hill-Norton

Sir, The letter from Lord Irvine of Lairg (December 5) if it does nothing else precisely confirms my assessment of his self-conceit (leading article, December 1, and further letter, December 9). If you need to refer to it again you can now add "appears to have had a sense of humour by-pass".

None of this would matter much — except for his unfortunate colleagues perhaps — if it had not led him to try to interfere with the long-established and orderly process of discipline in the Army by intervening in the case of Major Eric Joyce (report, "Torries protest as major evades court martial", earlier editions, December 1).

For the sake of all the men and women in all three Services, one must hope that this will be as unsuccessful as his letter has been.

I remain, Sir, yours faithfully,  
HILL-NORTON,  
House of Lords,  
December 9.

## Jacob of Ancona

From Dr David Abulafia

Sir, Mr David Selbourne (letter, December 5), describing a manuscript which he has still to produce, cannot defend himself by using the text of Jacob of Ancona to verify events, when the very nature of that text is in doubt.

On the other hand, can produce manuscript evidence to show that his original text, slightly edited down (article, "An amazing journey — or just a hoax?", December 1), said that it was the Genoese colony in Acire, not Acire itself, that was in ruins "at the time of Jacob's arrival".

Mr Selbourne invites "scholars of medieval Aragon" to investigate Aaron of Barcelona. Having written extensively on Aragon, I emphatically refute his existence.

Yours faithfully,  
DAVID ABULAFIA,  
Corville and Caius College,  
Cambridge CB2 1TA,  
d.a.1000@hermes.cam.ac.uk  
December 5.

## Forces honours

From Major-General Ken Perkins

Sir, In the Armed Forces operational honours list that you publish today, half of the places are occupied by commissioned officers who numerically are but a small proportion of the Forces. The "other ranks" deserve better recognition.

It is no justification to weight the list in favour of officers because of their more onerous responsibilities; these are already rewarded by pay and privileges.

The criteria when deciding who is to be honoured should simply be how much beyond the call of duty at their particular level have the men and women in question performed, and in my experience "other ranks" perform above the normal call of duty just as often as officers. The Ministry of Defence needs to acknowledge this.

Yours faithfully,  
KEN PERKINS,  
4 Bedwyn Common,  
Marlborough SN8 3HZ,  
December 9.

From Ms Kay E. Lacey

Sir, I was concerned to read in David Selbourne's *The City of Light* that Jacob of Ancona gives two pearls for the ears of his maid, Buccazuppo. I assume that this implies for earrings but, as a textile and dress historian with a special interest in the subject, I am doubtful that a western woman at this date would wear them.

It is a common misconception that medieval people wore earrings. In the West they are not worn after the Viking period (c AD1000), and only in the first quarter of the 16th century do they appear again. Only "moors" are represented as wearing solitary earrings in the medieval period.

I have seen a pair of 14th-century Indonesian earrings made of gold. I know of none with pearls.

Yours etc,  
KAY LACEY,  
London School of Economics and Political Science,  
Department of International History,  
Houghton Street, WC2A 2AE,  
k.lacey@lse.ac.uk  
December 5.

## Arts funding after Opera House row

From Mr John Lettis

Sir, I think many will endorse Lord Rees-Mogg's comment ("Twilight of the Garden", December 4) that "if arts funding is to be handled in this unpleasant way, there will be few people willing to accept such unpleasant conditions".

I speak from some personal experience. I have had nearly 30 years of running the Museum of the Year Award — and finding the money to run it. I have also been at the centre of one successful bid to the Millennium Commission and one major bid (as yet unresolved) to another lottery agency. Yet if anyone asked whether I would think of doing the same kind of thing again — unpaid, as the board of the Royal Opera House were — after this unpleasant debacle, I would find it difficult to say yes.

There is sometimes a grudging attitude among the apparatuses in the giving agencies today which makes us recipients wonder if we are on trial. It may well be more blessed to hear the State's revenues (which are supplied by us humble taxpayers) than it is to distribute them, but we do not need such frequent reminders.

The now resigned board of the Royal Opera House will know what I mean. They have been pilloried, as dilettantes or unpaid amateurs (or both), by a committee of quite handsomely rewarded professional politicians whose qualifications and experience are not immediately reassuring.

Yours sincerely,  
JOHN LETTIS,  
9a North Street, SW4 0HN,  
December 5.

From Earl Alexander of Tunis

Sir, Mr John Major states (letter, December 8; see also letters, December 9) that parliamentary select committee reports are "very important", and that he would "like the select committee system to maintain its authority as a check upon government". These assertions are at odds with his regard to such committees when he was Prime Minister.

The Treasury Select Committee, after taking much evidence on the problems of Lloyd's of London, twice recommended a thorough inquiry into the alleged wrongdoing (reports, May 26, 1995, and March 21, 1996). The Government under Mr Major consistently refused, using the excuse that nothing would be gained from such an inquiry.

I need hardly add that the sums of money involved in the Lloyd's fiasco far exceed those of the Royal Opera House.

Yours faithfully,  
ALEXANDER OF TUNIS,  
House of Lords,  
December 9.

## Keeping in touch

From Dr J. W. Brooke Barnett

Sir, At Waterloo Station recently I noticed that many of the travellers were unable to negotiate the crowded concourse without the aid of their mobile phones.

It did make me wonder whether in isolated spots such as Dartmoor, lost schoolgirls (report, December 9) could benefit from having a mobile phone. It could save several thousand pounds in searching for them.

Yours faithfully,  
J. W. BROOKE BARNETT,  
Flat 18,  
65 Courtfield Gardens, SW6 0NQ,  
December 10.

## Comings and goings

From the Head Master of Westminster School

Sir, This day contains an interesting double bill. Mr Gerry Adams walks into 10 Downing Street for the first time; HM The Queen walks off the Royal Yacht for the last time.

Yours etc,  
D. M. SUMMERS-SCALE,  
Head Master, Westminster School,  
17 Dean's Yard, SW1P 3PB,  
December 11.

## Castles in the air

From Commander T. V. G. Binney, RN (ret)

Sir, Like many others, I should imagine, surfing today's letters before selecting an order of reading, I assumed that Dr John Swales's letter, with its talk of "foibles" and "millennium", had to be a re-launch of the dome correspondence.

Alas it was only a balloon, but while we're on the subject is there any chance that Mr Branson might now offer Mr Mandelson his redundant helium?

What a grand sight that would be.

Yours faithfully,  
GILES BINNEY,  
Close Cottage,  
Rogate, Petersfield GU31 5HN,  
December 11.

From Mr David A. Leahy

Sir, Could it be that we now have a one-word English translation for *Schadenfreude* — Branson?

Yours faithfully,  
DAVID A. LEAHY,  
14 Dunham Rise,  
Altrincham WA14 2BB,  
December 11.











## NEWS

## Choice of history for Adams

■ Tony Blair looked Gerry Adams directly in the eye at 10 Downing Street and offered him a "choice of history" — violence and despair or peace and progress.

The first Prime Minister for 76 years to play host to an Irish republican leader, Mr Blair said: "It is important that you remain committed to peaceful means. If we were to slip back, I believe we would slip back to something worse than what came before" — Pages 1, 9

## Queen bids farewell to friend

■ The Queen's eyes were glassy, and she appeared to struggle to contain her emotions. The Princess Royal dabbed her eyes with a white handkerchief, and the Prince of Wales shook his head. The Royal Family, schooled in the art of stoicism, found it particularly hard to bid farewell to *Britanna* — Page 1

## Labour rebellion

Labour MPs threatened to stage a second revolt over disability benefit cutbacks as the Government drew back from taking strong disciplinary measures against the 47 "lone parent" parliamentary rebels — Page 1

## Bremner funeral

The funeral of the Leeds and Scotland soccer star Billy Bremner near Doncaster turned into a two-hour celebration of a great sporting life — Page 10

## Illegal garden

The retired couple who spent almost £10,000 and eight years turning a rubbish tip into a garden have lost their year-long fight against a council ban. They have been told to plough up the site — Page 11

## Chicken flu scare

As health experts warned that chicken-borne flu could become a pandemic disease, Hong Kong schools prepared for the possibility of having to destroy pet animals — Page 14

## Euro clash

Britain and France were on course for a head-on clash over the single currency after Tony Blair refused to give ground in his fight for a seat on the body that will oversee it — Page 2

## Tiny heroine

A petite jeweller who stopped an armed robber in his tracks was commended for her "remarkable bravery" by an Old Bailey judge — Page 3

## Toy condemned

Fostering and adoption agencies called for a ban on the sale of the latest cyberpet toy to reach Britain from Japan. It features a virtual foster child — Page 5

## Prosecution case

The Lord Chancellor is to look again at allowing Crown Prosecution Service lawyers the right to prosecute jury trials in the Crown Court — Page 6

## 'Mad cow' warning

A scientist advised parents to encourage young children to eat chicken rather than beef or lamb because of the risks posed by "mad cow" disease — Page 7

## Scent of scandal for Mrs Clinton

■ A musty former gentleman's club, which only recently admitted women, was licking its wounds after an attendant threw out Hillary Clinton for breaking house rules by spraying on perfume. Unfortunately for the University Club, Mrs Clinton was with Cindy Adams, the "First Lady of New York Gossip" who reported the incident in her column — Page 1



Fion Jenkins links arms with her fiancé William Hague and his Madame Tussaud wax dummy at its unveiling yesterday

## Hunting expedition

LucasVarity, the engineering group formed in a transatlantic merger, is on the hunt for acquisitions after selling its VarityPerkins diesel engine business to Caterpillar of the US for £803 million — Page 27

Liberty: Denis Cassidy has been removed from the board of the department store after a vote by shareholders — Page 27

In the soup: The former venture capitalist who helped to oust Andrew Palmer from the board of his New Covent Garden Soup Company, took control — Page 27

Markets: The FTSE 100 fell 94.8 to 5035.9. Sterling fell from 103.9 to 103.8 after rising from \$1.6514 to \$1.6535 but falling from DM2.9441 to DM2.9322 — Page 30

Crickets: England beat India by seven runs in the opening match of the Sharjah Cup. Alec Stewart scored 116 for England, who lost their last eight wickets for 41 — Page 52

Football: There are £100 million worth of reasons why Manchester United might have to be even more special than they believe themselves to be if they are to win the European Cup — Page 48

Rugby union: Cliff Brittle, the chairman of the RFU management board, challenged the game to accept a revolutionary vision of English rugby — Page 49

Swimming: James Hickman won the 200 metres butterfly at the British championships but the race will have to be swum again because of a starting-block problem — Page 50

Richard Morrison: Next Tuesday the J. Paul Getty Centre opens. The product of a £700-million building project, it is the costliest art gallery on Earth — Page 35

Actor triumphs: Philip Voss turns in a superb performance as Shylock in the RSC's production of *The Merchant of Venice* — Page 35

Pop on Friday: Robert Miles may have sold 13 million records but he can still walk down the street unnoticed — Page 36

Albums of the year: From Roni Size to Supergrass, Caitlin Moran and David Sinclair choose their top pop releases of 1997 — Page 37

Solo comedians: After a Perrier Award and a hit single, Frank Skinner has become Britain's most popular comedian — Page 38

Glen rock retro: From the cover of this month's *Vogue*, the image of Stella Tennant stares out. She is wearing an Armani net shirt embroidered in glitter thread and pearls — Page 20

Gone to the dogs: It is the lights that you see first, the neon glare drawing you through an East End night, and then the stadium: the Stow, as the regulars say — Page 21

Christmas looks: In Naples, Diana, Princess of Wales has been promoted to a crib figure — Page 21

In the air: Richard Branson's failure to circumnavigate the world has been more than matched by the need to establish himself as a serious media player — Page 42

Fighting talk: *Punch* is being talked about again. But is it the right publicity for its publisher Mohamed Al Fayed — Page 45

Typeset: Teachers appear to belong to two main personality types, which are related to the age range of the children they choose to teach — Page 41

A united Europe is being built in our lifetime after being long-awaited. The communal defence project for Europe is not a utopia, it is a necessity — Page 4

— Le Figaro

## TOMORROW

## IN THE SATURDAY TIMES

■ DISCO CLASSICS  
The return of sparkly boob-tubes and sequined trousers

■ MARCO ON MICHELIN  
Marco Pierre White gives his judgment on one-star L'Escargot

Preview: A young PC has a fraught baptism and Rik Mayall plays straight. *The Bill* (ITV, 8pm). Review: Matthew Bond enjoys the disgustingly funny men on the sofa — Page 50, 51

## Rebels with a cause

A Government that prided itself on control and discipline lost both on Wednesday night — Page 23

## Climate in the Senate

Although Vice President Albert Gore hailed the accord as a "vital turning point" and President Clinton showed similar enthusiasm, it is unlikely that the US Senate will agree with them — Page 23

## Forked tongues

Mr Adams wants the British public to believe he is a modern Nujomo or a Gaelic Mandela, a reluctant fighter crying freedom in a foreign tongue — Page 23

## MATTHEW PARRIS

Imagine there existed on these islands a state within the State. Let us call it Volser — Page 22

## JOHN LLOYD

Terrorists spend their youth being hunted as murderers, their middle age being fitted as freedom fighters and their later years ruling as presidents — Page 22

## PHILIP HOWARD

Package tours have replaced the schooner *Hispaniola*, and so scattered the mystery of the Treasure Islands of the world. But tax havens in Guernsey or the Cayman Islands sound as mysteriously exotic to most people — Page 22

## PETER RIDDELL

Freedom of information is an elusive concept, desirable in principle in a generalised good government way but often harder to define in practice — Page 13

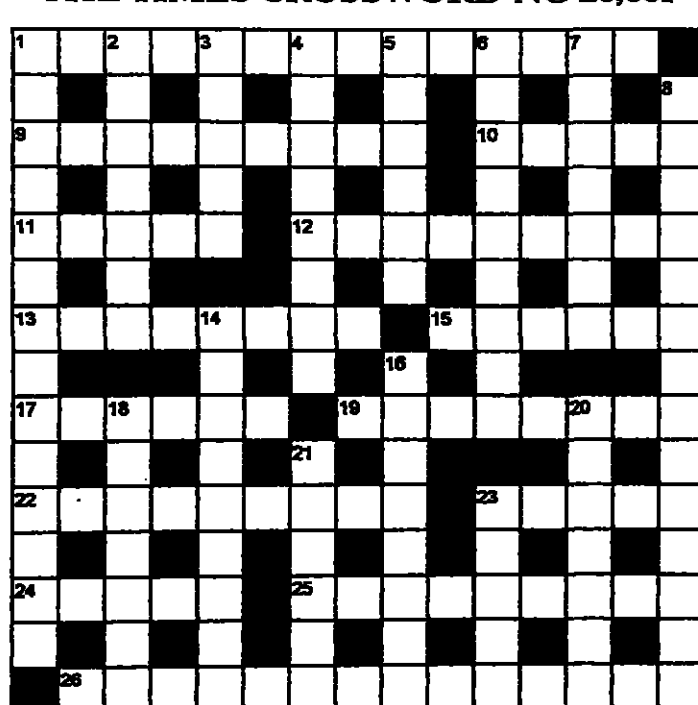
Lord Kishin, financier; Dale Owen, architect; Robert Lewis, drama teacher — Page 25

## Reviews

Power of the whips; doorsteps; Opera House; Branson's balloon; antidepressants; prejudice in Scotland; Jacob of Ancona — Page 23

4, 17, 22, 29, 38, 48, Bonus: 20

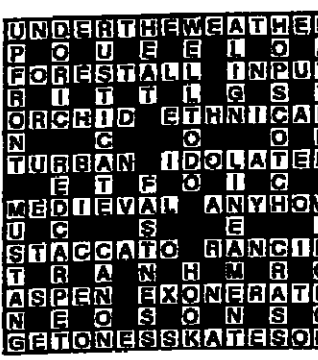
## THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,661



## ACROSS

- 1 Construction in Kensington reminiscent of one close to Victoria (6,8).
- 9 Old weapon the heartless butcher ordered (9).
- 10 Ancient historian America ignored is silent (5).
- 11 A king sleeping gets very hot (5).
- 12 One of the oldest diggers found spring in Lincoln (9).
- 13 The number of a colleague on the other side (8).
- 15 Drive from a rendezvous (6).
- 17 Try again to get nurse to swallow jelly, for example (6).
- 19 Grub enthusiast trapping unknown pest in bothouse (5,3).
- 22 A belief that's universally shared? (9).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,660



Times Two Crossword, page 52

Latest Road and Weather conditions  
UK Weather: All regions 0236 444 910  
UK Weather: All regions 0236 444 910  
UK Weather: All regions 0236 444 910

Weather by Fax  
0236 444 910  
0236 444 910  
0236 444 910

World City Weather  
123 destinations worldwide  
0236 444 910  
0236 444 910

AA Car reports by fax  
0236 444 910  
0236 444 910

Sun rise: 7.57 am  
Sun set: 3.52 pm  
Moon rise: 5.51 am  
Moon set: 3.15 pm

Full moon December 14  
London 3.52 pm to 7.58 am  
Edinburgh 3.36 pm to 8.36 am  
Manchester 3.45 pm to 8.17 am  
Perth 4.20 pm to 8.13 am

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING  
Recycled paper made up  
of 43% of the raw material for  
UK newspapers in the  
second half of 1996

FLIGHT SAVERS  
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General: Colder across England and Wales. Early showers in southwest England and East Angles will clear away, giving all parts of southern Britain a dry, sunny day. Scotland mainly dry and sunny, but western Scotland will be stormy, with the showers merging at times to give a longer spell of rain. Northern Ireland will have sunny spells and occasional showers. The Irish Republic dry but rather cloudy later.

Tonight, cold over England and Wales with clear skies; sharp frost inland. Other areas cloudier with showers.

London, Cent S, E, SW, NW, Cent N, NE, England, Midlands, Wales, Lakes, hills: Dry with plenty of sunshine. Light or moderate wind, between southwest and northeast. Max 8C (46F).

SE England, E Angles, Channel Is: Early showers clearing quickly to give a dry day with plenty of sunshine. Light or moderate NW wind. Max 8C (46F).

Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Orkney: Dry, sunny intervals, especially this morning. Fresh SW wind. Max 8C (46F).

SW, NW Scotland, Glasgow, Cant Highlands, Argyll, Shetland: Sunny intervals and showers, merging to give longer spells of rain later. Strong southwest wind. Max 8C (46F).

N Ireland: Dry with sunny intervals at first. Cloudier with some showers later. A fresh southwesterly wind. Max 8C (46F).

Republic of Ireland: Dry with sunny spells but becoming rather cloudy in the afternoon. Moderate W wind. Max 8C (46F).

Outlook: Cold with frost in parts. Most places dry with sunny spells, but showers in western Scotland on Saturday.

Area	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Temp	Wind	Cloud
Aberdeen	0-11	7-10	4-5	Larvik	0-11	7-10
Angus	0-11	7-10	4-5	Leeds	0-11	7-10
Argyll	0-11	7-10	4-5	Lisburn	0-11	7-10
Ayr	0-11	7-10	4-5	London	0-11	7-10
Belfast	0-11	7-10	4-5	Lowestoft	0-11	7-10
Birmingham	0-11	7-10	4-5	Manchester	0-11	7-10
Bristol	0-11	7-10	4-5	Marblehead	0-11	7-10
Buckingham	0-11	7-10	4-5	Merseyside	0-11	7-10
Cardiff	0-11	7-10	4-5	Morecambe	0-11	7-10
Carlisle	0-11	7-10	4-5	Newquay	0-11	7-10
Caswell	0-11	7-10	4-5	Northwich	0-11	7-10
Carmarthen	0-11	7-10	4-5	Perth	0-11	7-10
Caswell	0-11	7-10	4-5	Portsmouth	0-11	7-10
Caswell	0-11	7-10	4-5	Reading	0-11	7-10
Caswell	0-11	7-10	4-5	Salisbury	0-11	7-10
Caswell	0-11	7-10	4-5	Shrewsbury	0-11	7-10
Caswell	0-11	7-10	4-5	Southampton	0-11	7-10
Caswell	0-11	7-10	4-5	Stirling	0-11	7-10
Caswell	0-11	7-10	4-5	Stroud	0-11	7-10
Caswell	0-11	7-10	4-5	Sunderland	0-11	7-10
Caswell	0-11	7-10	4-5	Sussex	0-11	7-10
Caswell	0-11	7-10	4-5	Torquay	0-11	7-10
Caswell	0-11	7-10	4-5	Truro	0-11	7-10
Caswell	0-11	7-10	4-5	Warrington	0-11	7-10
Caswell	0-11	7-10	4-5	Wexham	0-11	7-10
Caswell	0-11	7-10	4-5	Weymouth	0-11	7-10



Changes to chart below from noon: lows E and D will drift northeast and fill as they amalgamate. Lows C and K will move north. High C will build over the British Isles

Area	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Temp	Wind	Cloud
London	11.2	4.2	23.0	4.4	11.2	4.4
Aberdeen	04.7	12.4	17.7	13.1	04.7	12.4
Angus	08.4	3.4	21.0	3.5	08.4	3.4
Argyll	04.3	11.5	17.0	12.1	04.3	11.5
Ayr	02.2	5.3	12.4	5.5	02.2	5.3
Belfast	08.4	6.5	21.3	6.5	08.4	6.5
Birmingham	08.2	6.1	21.4	6.2	08.2	6.1
Bristol	08.2	6.1	21.4	6.2	08.2	6.1
Buckingham	08.2	6.1	21.4	6.2	08.2	6.1
Cardiff	08.2	6.1	21.4	6.2	08.2	6.1
Carlisle	08.2	6.1	21.4	6.2	08.2	6.1
Caswell	08.2	6.1	21.4	6.2	08.2	6.1
Carmarthen	08.2	6.1	21.4	6.2	08.2	6.1
Caswell	08.2	6.1	21.4	6.2	08.2	6.1
Caswell	08.2	6.1	21.4	6.2	08.2	6.1
Caswell	08.2	6.1	21.4	6.2	08.2	6.1
Caswell	08.2	6.1	21.4	6.2	08.2	6.1
Caswell	08.2	6.1	21.4	6.2	08.2	6.1
Caswell	08.2	6.1	21.4	6.2	08.2	6.1
Caswell	08.2	6.1	21.4	6.2	08.2	6.1
Caswell	08.2	6.1	21.4	6.2	08.2	6.1

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Gloucester, Kent, and Guernsey, 15C (59F); lowest day temp: Loch Geochloch, Highland, 4C (39F); highest night temp: Dunstable, South Lancashire, 0.9C; highest wind: Bignor Ridge, West Sussex blowing in, 14 mph (22 km/h); highest rain: 5.2 in.

Total number of lives saved so far this year: 1,241  
Total number of lifeboat launches so far this year: 5,266  
Cost to RNLI per day: £193,000  
Cost to taxpayer: £0  
To make a donation, telephone: 0800 543210  
Lifeboats  
Royal National Lifeboat Institution  
Reg. Charity No. 209603



# THE TIMES

2

INSIDE SECTION

2 TODAY

## ECONOMICS

Anatole Kaletsky looks back on a tempestuous year  
PAGE 31

## MEDIA

Why journalism is poorer without Woodrow Wyatt  
PAGE 43

## SPORT

Stewart's century paves way for England victory  
PAGES 46-52

TELEVISION AND RADIO  
PAGES 50, 51

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY DECEMBER 12 1997

## Korea in crisis as currency falls on debt fears

By JENNIFER VEALE IN SEOUL AND JANET BUSH IN LONDON

THE Asian financial crisis intensified yesterday as the South Korean won fell 10 per cent in four minutes on fears that the country is in an even worse economic position than had been feared.

A leading international credit rating agency downgraded the country's debt because of suspicions that its debts are far greater, and its foreign exchange reserves much smaller, than the Government has disclosed.

Trading at Seoul's foreign currency exchange came to a grinding halt within a few minutes of opening for the second day running as the won plunged another 10 per cent — its permissible limit — to close at a record low of 1,719.80 to the US dollar.

Analysts said that it was becoming impossible to predict the future movement of the won, which has lost half of its value against the US dollar this year. "We are in uncharted territory in terms of won devaluation and its hard to make logical arguments where it will stop because its fall is based on such negative sentiment," said H Jin Lee, an analyst at KEB Smith Barney Securities in Seoul.

The won's plunge took its toll of the stock market which fell by nearly six per cent to close at 377.77, down 22.48 points. Yesterday's government move to open the stock market to foreign investors days earlier than planned failed to shore up the market. One local broker said that foreign investors regarded the move as "another South Korean joke".

Events in Seoul battered markets throughout Asia. Japan, whose banking system is badly exposed to South Korea and which is a leading exporter to the country, suffered badly, the stock market dropping by around 5 per cent. Hong Kong shares also slumped.

The knock-on effect in Europe and on Wall Street was severe. In London, heavy selling of British banks with heavy exposure to Asia helped to push the FTSE 100 index to a loss of nearly 2 per cent. The index closed 94.8 points lower at 5,095.9. On Wall Street, the Dow Jones industrial average was 137.01 down at 7,841.78 at midday.

Lin Chang-yul, South Korea's Finance Minister, said yesterday that the country's usable foreign exchange reserves stood at \$10 billion (£6 billion). He countered speculation that the \$57 billion package put in place by the IMF

last week may not be enough to stabilise market conditions, saying that it would be sufficient for now.

But his reassurances came amid reports that South Korea would ask the IMF to speed up the delivery of \$21 billion in rescue loans.

Yi Seung-gook, head of research at ABN AMRO Hoare Govett in Seoul, said: "If the situation does not improve in the short-term, this nation may require almost \$100 billion."

So far, Seoul has received a mere \$5.6 billion of the IMF-brokered rescue package and has used the cash to prop up its dwindling reserves.

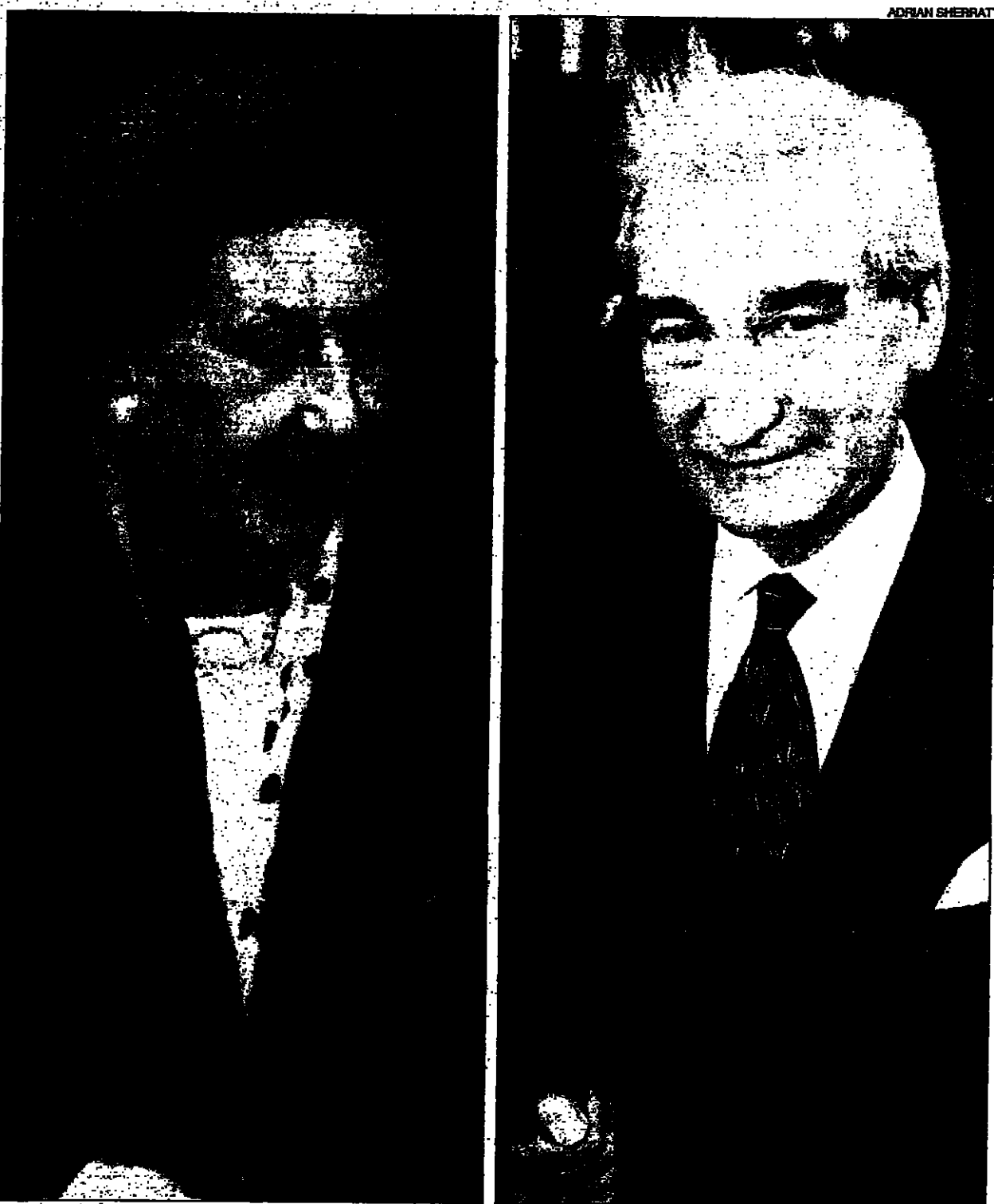
In a televised address to the nation, Kim Young-sam, South Korea's President, said that he would honour the agreement with the IMF without hitch.

However his words sounded hollow amid mounting concern that South Korea's next president, to be elected next week, will reject the austerity measures being demanded by the Fund.

The front-running candidate, Kim Dae-jung, has vowed to renegotiate the rescue loans deal if he wins.

Commentary, page 29  
Stock market, page 30

## Cassidy loses Liberty in showdown



Elizabeth Stewart-Liberty and Denis Cassidy yesterday after the shareholder vote that saw the chairman ousted

## Chairman forced out by vote at EGM

By PAUL DURMAN

DENIS CASSIDY yesterday lost his battle to stay as chairman of Liberty, raising the spectre of further boardroom turbulence at the London department store company.

Before he was voted out of office, Mr Cassidy told shareholders at yesterday's meeting of Liberty's shareholders that it was unlikely that the appointment of Brian Myerson and Odile Griffith as new directors "will lead to a harmonious working relationship within the board". He suggested the positions of Ian Thomson, managing director, and Andrew Garey, the finance director who has taken over as chairman, may quickly become untenable.

Mr Thomson and Mr Garey, along with Liberty's other two directors, strongly backed Mr Cassidy in his attempt to defeat the motion for his removal brought by Mr Myerson, who controls a 16.9 per cent stake, and the Stewart-Liberty family, who control 27.1 per cent. Ms Griffith is adviser to Elizabeth Stewart-Liberty, widow of a former chairman of the company.

Mr Thomson and Mr Garey yesterday defended the plans for a £43 million redevelopment of the Regent Street store, which Mr Myerson and the Stewart-Libertys have criticised for being staggeringly expensive.

Mr Cassidy's removal was backed by 48.1 per cent of the shares, meaning the concert party picked up only 1 per cent outside their own holdings. The concert party did not receive the support of a single institution.

Unstable door, page 31

## BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FTSE 100	5025.9	(-94.8)
Yield	3.25%	
FTSE All share	2371.64	(-36.52)
Nikkei	16050.15	(-427.97)
New York		
Dow Jones	7841.78	(-137.01)*
S&P Composite	954.53	(-15.26)*

US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/8%	(5 1/8%)
Long Bond	101 1/8%	(100 1/8%)
Yield	6.01%	(6.07%)

LONDON MONEY		
3-mth Interbank	7 1/4%	(7 1/4%)
Life long gilt	12 1/2%	(12 1/2%)
Future (Mar)		

STERLING		
New York		
\$	1.6557*	(1.6495)
London		
DM	1.6540	(1.6515)
FF	2.9228	(2.9446)
FF	9.8200	(9.8581)
SP	1.3303	(2.3854)
Yen	215.27	(213.06)
£ Index	103.8	(103.5)

DOLLAR		
London		
DM	1.7696*	(1.7672)
FF	5.9245*	(5.9535)
SP	1.4320*	(1.4470)
Yen	129.52*	(129.45)
£ Index	106.4	(106.2)

Tokyo close Yen 129.33

NORTH SEA OIL		
Brent 15-day (Feb)	\$17.60	(\$17.65)

GOLD		
London close	\$263.75	(\$263.95)

\* denotes midday trading price

## Less damage

The first signs that the worst effects of a strong pound may be over for exporters came yesterday from the Confederation of British Industry. Its latest survey showed a modest improvement in export orders. Page 28

## Bid talks

Shares in Triplex Lloyd rose from 229 1/2 p to 263 1/2 p as the Midlands engineer admitted that it was in £186 million takeover talks. Page 32

## LucasVarity prepares to make acquisitions

By ADAM JONES

LUCASVARITY, the engineering group formed in a transatlantic merger last year, has said it is on the hunt for acquisitions after selling its VarityPerkins diesel engine business to Caterpillar of the US for £803 million.

The sale of VarityPerkins signals a change in strategy aimed at improving the company's rating. LucasVarity shares have struggled since Lucas of the UK and Varity of the US merged in September 1996. Having reached a high of 299p, the shares have fallen, closing at 192 1/2 p yesterday.

The disposal follows an approach from Caterpillar, which had sought to buy the engine maker before the merger and is ultimately VarityPerkins' main customer.

Victor Rice, chief executive of LucasVarity, said the board decided to sell because of new

US laws on engine emissions. These bring engines designed for use in construction or agriculture, the focus of VarityPerkins operations, into line with the diesel engines used in cars and trucks.

LucasVarity said it would need to expand in the latter category to stay competitive and this would have been too difficult. It said the £803 million sale price is more than an internal valuation of the subsidiary. One City analyst said: "It's a very good price for Perkins but the deal will be dilutive unless they find something to do with the money."

VarityPerkins employs just over 4,000 people at sites in Peterborough, Stafford and Shrewsbury. Once the sale is complete, LucasVarity will have three main divisions: braking systems; other automotive, which includes diesel

systems; and aerospace components. Up to £800 million has been earmarked for acquisitions in these areas.

LucasVarity also announced yesterday that it was not going to produce a diesel fuel injection system designed for Volkswagen. The scrapped system did not meet the company's criteria for likely profits. A spokesman said it would have applications in other activities. The company also said it has customer commitments worth £500 million to supply fuel injection systems to Ford and Renault.

Third-quarter results showed that operating profit margins increased in all divisions against the second quarter, except for diesel engines, which fell from 8.5 per cent to 8.3 per cent. Third-quarter profit was £35 million before tax, on £1.16 billion total sales.

## Jobs exodus for FSA also-rans

By OUR CITY STAFF

THE Financial Services Authority (FSA), the new super-regulator, is braced for an exodus of senior staff after today's board meeting to approve 15-20 top appointments.

The watchdog is believed to have received close to 100 applications for the jobs, mostly from within the existing regulators, including the Personal Investment Authority and Investment Management Regulatory Organisation.

It is expected that many of the unsuccessful applicants will leave the FSA, rather than face effective demotion. The appointments will be at director level, reporting to the three co-managing directors named by Howard Davies, executive chairman, earlier this year.

Staff morale is already low because of uncertainty over pay and positions. Commentary, page 29

## Freedman in the Soup after agreed takeover

By CHRIS AYRES

THE former venture capitalist who helped to oust Andrew Palmer from the board of his ground-breaking New Covent Garden Soup Company yesterday took control of the business through an agreed takeover bid.

S Daniels, the food company chaired by Cyril Freedman, is buying NCGS for a maximum £24 million. Mr Palmer is expected to receive more than £2 million for his stake. S Daniels also plans to raise £5.3 million through the placing of 18 million shares at 30p each.

NCGS, which has patented its method of mass-producing fresh-tasting soup and now makes chilled baked beans, was founded by Mr Palmer in

1985. He left his job as a small companies analyst at Capel-Cure Myers to work in NCGS's kitchens.

Mr Palmer later sold shares to Apex Partners, the venture capitalist group of which Mr Freedman was a partner, to raise cash. The relationship turned sour, and in 1993 Apex helped to force Mr Palmer to stand down. He was replaced by a team of managers.

Mr Freedman has turned S Daniels from a struggling tea and coffee business into a successful fresh food producer since he joined in 1995. He said he expected the expanded company — worth about £36 million — to double in size within the next five years.

## Exchange may alter 'incorrect' Sets prices

By ADAM JONES

THE London Stock Exchange may alter closing share prices on New Year's Eve if it feels they are not "correct". The unprecedented proposal follows anxiety that the new trading system, Sets, may be manipulated on December 31. Prices formed under Sets can be volatile if there are not many buyers or sellers.

Because volumes are normally tight on December 31, a half-day in dealing rooms, fund managers are worried that end-of-year fund valuations may be artificially cut by rogue orders driving down the FTSE 100 index, reducing their performance fees.

The Exchange said yesterday it

would meet with "key market constituents", probably from its committees, to decide a formula that will enable it to recognise "anomalous closing prices". These closing prices, derived from the last trade, will be struck out and a substitute inserted. This could be the price of the penultimate trade or a calculation using a formula agreed by market participants. Only the figure used in index calculations and individual stock valuations would change.

A plan to cut the half day to two hours or even one hour of trading has been shelved, although trading will be cut by 20 minutes, with a session from 8.30am to 12.10pm on December 31.

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Small firms will be able to charge base rate plus 8 per cent, says minister

## Late payment levy to be tougher than expected

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY  
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

SMALL businesses that are owed payment by big companies will be able to charge interest on the debts at a tougher than expected rate under a new law proposed by the Government. Small businesses will be able to demand interest on late payment at base rates plus 8 per cent after the Bank of England and businesses told the Department of Trade and Industry that it should increase the rate it had planned to impose. The DTI had intended the penalty

to be base rates plus 4 per cent. Barbara Roche, the minister with responsibility for small firms, denied that the interest rate in the Bill on late payment was punitive. She said the level was based on the rate at which business could borrow.

The Bill, which should become law by July, will be phased in across the whole of business over four years. Initially small enterprises — such as those with fewer than 50 employees — will be able to take action against large companies and public sector organisations. After two years, small businesses will also be

able to charge small business interest. After a further two years all businesses will be covered by the law. The phasing gives small businesses, which may not always have the resources or the expertise, time to get their house in order.

Mrs Roche said the Bill — which has been criticised by small business groups — would help to change the culture of business payment.

She said: "You can't have a piece of legislation that automatically overnight changes the payment culture."

The DTI's moves to tackle late payment

through statutory interest have been attacked for not getting to grips with cash flow difficulties. Business groups have also complained that the right to interest payments will be difficult to implement because small companies will jeopardise contracts if they take action.

Mrs Roche said the means by which the right is enforced would be up to the companies. They could submit new invoices with the interest added on and if the debtor refused to settle then they would have redress through the courts.

## CBI cautious over signs that export pressure is easing

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

THE first signs that the worst effects of a strong pound may be over for British exporters came yesterday from the Confederation of British Industry, whose latest industrial survey showed a modest improvement in manufacturers' export orders.

While the City saw the latest CBI survey as an indication of an easing of the pressure from sterling, confederation leaders remained cautious, suggesting that it might well be only a respite from the impact of the strong pound.

CBI leaders said that the strength of sterling was continuing to have "an adverse

effect on export demand", though they thought that the sharp deterioration on order books in the middle of the year now seemed to have halted.

In its latest monthly trends survey of almost 1,100 manufacturers, accounting between them for almost half the UK's manufactured exports, the CBI said that 13 per cent of manufacturers judged their export order books to be above normal, and 42 per cent said that they were below normal.

Although this still gave a balance of -29 per cent, suggesting a continuing fall in exports, it compares with balances of -34 and -33 per cent in

the previous two months, and -37 per cent in August.

Sudhir Junankar, the CBI economic analysis associate director, said: "The slight improvement in export demand over the past month provides a welcome breathing space for hard-pressed exporters."

"However, this good news cannot disguise the fact that sterling's strength is still having an adverse effect on the ability of companies to attract orders from overseas customers."

A range of City economists took the view that the collapse in manufacturers' export orders seemed to be easing, with some of them suggesting that the CBI's figures might show that the worst might now be over for UK exporting firms as sterling's appreciation has fallen back.

Indeed, the improvement in export orders, together with domestic orders continuing to hold up, was sufficient to push the balance of firms reporting total orders to be above normal into the positive for the first time in two years, with a net 2 per cent of companies recording above-normal total orders.

As a result, City analysts suggested that the survey's findings were better than had been expected, and that, accordingly, the base rate should be put on hold.

However, the survey showed that manufacturers' output expectations confirm the predicted slowdown in growth, with the net balance of 10 per cent of companies reporting a likelihood of output rising being half what it was two months ago.

Although still weak export order books are pushing down output expectations, the outlook for price inflation remains promising, with price expectations "significantly" lower than they were at this time last year.



Ed Wallis of PowerGen is looking for a purchase

## Generators state their price for saving coal

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY  
AND JAMES LANDALE

BIG PAYBACKS to the electricity generators are expected to be delivered soon by the Government in return for their help in ensuring the short-term survival of the coal industry.

Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General, is understood to have asked the generators what the Government could do for them if they ensured a future for coal. A critical meeting between the heads of National Power, The Energy Group and PowerGen on Wednesday guaranteed a short-term survival plan for coal just hours before the Prime Minister delivered his pledge that current level coal production would be maintained until the end of June.

In return each generator is thought to have demanded concessions from the Government. It is expected that PowerGen, where Ed Wallis is chairman and chief executive, will be allowed to buy a regional electricity company, while The Energy Group would have pressed its case that the moratorium on new gas-fired power stations should not last. National Power is likely to have raised wider issues concerning market share and the review into the electricity trading market.

Further talks will be held between Mr Robinson and the generators on boosting stocks to beyond the end of June to shape a medium and long-term future for the industry.

## Co-op to sell superstores

THE Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS), the retailer that earlier this year thwarted a £1.2 billion attempted bid by Andrew Regan, is to sell its 19 superstores, raising up to £300 million (Jason Nisse writes).

The disposal comes after a strategic review by LEK, the management consultants, and the appointment of Malcolm Hepworth, a former director

of Somerfield, as retail controller. He takes the post vacated when Allan Green was fired in May for passing information to Mr Regan.

Following the review, CWS is to concentrate on convenience stores and stores in market towns. Bill Shannon, head of its 19 superstores — each with more than 25,000 sq ft of sales

space — will be "recycled" to finance investment in the rest of the chain. The sell-off will be piecemeal as rival food retailers show interest in sites.

The CWS has appointed two new directors to its executive board. They are Trevor Hughes, who is integrating its supply operation, and Mervyn Pedley, the Co-operative Bank chief executive.

## Global banking deal poised for completion

NEGOTIATORS are "poised for a deal" to open up global banking, insurance and other financial services to international competition, Sir Leon Brittan, the European Union Trade Commissioner, said yesterday. Sir Leon, speaking on the eve of today's deadline to wrap up an accord, commented: "The apple is ripening rapidly on the tree, but needs a touch more sun to fall into our lap."

But despite the upbeat public comments there lurks serious worries that the Asian financial turmoil and American political objections threaten to halt, dilute or delay the deal just hours before the midnight deadline. Clinton administration officials were expected to meet in Washington to discuss the options. Renato Ruggiero, head of the World Trade Organisation chief, said: "Failure? I do not foresee that. No one has told me that they want to withdraw from the deal being worked out in Geneva." Numerous bilateral meetings are taking place today to work on final sticking points, and all participants are due to hold an informal meeting at the end of the day to take stock of progress.

## Zeneca expands plants

ZENECA is investing more than £9 million in manufacturing plants for two new drugs. The investment at its Zeneca Pharmaceuticals' Avon site, near Bristol, will create 25 jobs. The additional capacity follows the successful launch of Accolate, an asthma treatment, for sale overseas and Seroquel, a treatment for schizophrenia, and approved in the UK and US. The plants are part of a £1.5 billion international investment programme at Zeneca's drugs business. The Accolate plant will go into full production in 1998 and the Seroquel plant in the first half of 1999.

## US rethinks price index

THE American Government is considering changing the way that it calculates the Consumer Price Index, which may lead to a cut of up to a quarter-percentage point in the nation's main gauge of inflation. An announcement is planned by the end of the year. It could result in reduced cost-of-living increases for social security and could also affect investments, labour contracts and other agreements tied to the index. Any changes would take effect in early 1999. Since April, the Labour Department's Bureau of Labour Statistics has been publishing an experimental price index.

## Filtronic to withdraw bid

FILTRONIC COMTEK is seeking Australian Securities Commission clearance to withdraw its £7 million bid for Mitec, the microwave electronics company. Filtronic said that significant resources will now be made available to expand Filtronic's Asia regional headquarters, adding that the company plans to develop a new facility in Australia and to recruit new staff, particularly microwave engineers. Filtronic Comtek said: "The organic growth planned will be similar to that achieved in Filtronic Comtek operations in the UK and the US which now employ 1,000 people."

## Japan fund down £4m

JAPAN'S worsening economic crisis wiped £4 million off the value of the Martin Currie Japan Investment Trust in the six months to November 30, leaving it with assets of £18.9 million. The undiluted net asset value per share slumped 20.9 per cent from 100.4p to 79.4p. John Drysdale, chairman, said that core holdings in blue-chip exporters had prevented the trust from falling as far as its benchmark, the Topix index, which crashed by 25 per cent. There will be no dividend.

## ILP shares boosted

SHARES in ILP, the Irish protective packaging group, rose from 24p to 29½p yesterday after it revealed that it had received a number of approaches that may lead to an offer being made for the company. At yesterday's closing price the company was worth £6.36 million on the stock market. ILP said that shareholders would be kept informed of developments. In 1996 ILP made £1.07 million of profit on sales of £11.9 million. The shares, which reached a high of 78½p earlier this year, have come up from a recent low of 21½p.

## Alders

ALLDERS' pre-tax profits of £40.4 million for the year to the end of September 1996 included a profit of £33.2 million on the disposal of the international tax and duty free operations (Tempus, December 9). The company's underlying pre-tax profits for that year were £7.2 million, compared with £23.1 million for the year to September 30, 1997.

## Albert E Sharp to shed 120

By RICHARD MILES

ALBERT E SHARP, one of the UK's biggest stockbrokers, is to lay off 120 back-office staff after outsourcing its administration to Pershing, the clearing service owned by Donaldson Lufkin & Jenrette, the US investment bank.

Sharp, based in Birmingham, has been working with its regulator, the Securities and Futures Authority, to resolve a series of problems with its administration systems. Bill Dacombe, chairman and chief executive, said that

the five-year outsourcing deal would end the "complete diversion of effort" that the systems glitches had necessitated.

"The problems were clearly a bore which involved us in taking people out of the front office," he said. "We will now be able to focus on our core financial expertise of advising and managing funds."

The job losses at its Birmingham headquarters, representing a fifth of Sharp's workforce, will not take place until April. The company is

expected to make a provision in next year's accounts to cover the cost of the redundancies.

Development of software for Crest, the share settlement system, and the sheer volume of business generated by a wave of demutualisations have caused administrative problems for many stockbrokers. The worst affected has been Fidelity Brokerage Services, which the SFA forced to close to new business for six months.

Takeover talk, page 32



Cau: to run 253-hotel chain

## President of Hertz to join Forte Hotels

GRANADA has headhunted a top executive from Hertz, the car-hire group, to run its Forte hotel division — filling a gap left by Sir Rocco Forte's departure nearly two years ago (Jon Ashworth writes).

Antoine Cau, 50, a Frenchman who speaks four languages and lives in London, will next month join Forte Hotels as its chief executive. After seven years as president of Hertz International, he is taking charge of a 253-hotel worldwide chain made up of

three main brands — Le Meridien, Posthouse, and Heritage — together with individual London properties such as the Grosvenor House. Granada last year invested £120 million in its hotel division, which generates sales of about £1 billion a year.

Sir Rocco was ousted from Forte early in 1996 after Granada's £3.9 billion takeover. M. Cau's arrival may herald a new period of growth for Forte Hotels, whose performance has improved under Granada.

Bank	Rate	Bank	Rate	Bank	Rate	Bank	Rate
Australia \$	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68
Austria Sch	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68
Belgium Fr	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68
Canada \$	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68
Cyprus Cyp	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68
Denmark Kr	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68
France Fr	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68
Germany Dr	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68
Greece Dr	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68
Hong Kong \$	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68
Ireland P	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68
Italy Lira	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68
Japan Yen	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68	Bank	2.68

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# Regulating the flow of regulators

COMMENTARY  
by our City Editor

The nation's financial regulators are in a state of high expectation. Any day now their new supremo, Howard Davies, will announce the lucky winners of top jobs with his Financial Services Authority. But for many, the expectation will soon turn to disappointment and, perhaps, disaffection.

The structure of the FSA as an amalgam of existing regulatory bodies means that for every appointment Davies makes, he is turning down several applicants. The chap responsible for overseeing tea and coffee supplies at the FSA may be lucky enough to find himself cast in that role at the FSA but that means that his equivalent over at the PIA will have to revert to an apparently inferior role. It may be true, as the counsellors will no doubt claim, that being in charge of sugar rations at the FSA is just as important and pays as well, if not better, than the old tea and coffee job at the PIA, but the argument is unlikely to be persuasive, particularly as clients are likely to be beckoning with thick wads of notes for regulators prepared to bring their experience to the other side.

The drift of staff away from the regulators to come to the aid of the regulated has already caused problems for the authorities who must continue to carry out their duties while the FSA takes shape. The latest wave of appointments could precipitate a damaging torrent of senior level departures.

The public-spirited Davies is already having to cope with horrendous squabbling as he tries to construct his grand high regulator. Salaries, inevitably, are at issue since the structures vary greatly among the FSA components. The SPA, for instance, has become accustomed to remuneration levels which, while hardly on a par with those City firms it regulates, do not value its staff too insultingly by comparison. PIA staff are less easily insulted.

There are also issues of status involved. Losing the kudos of working for the Bank of England constitutes a bad enough blow to those of its staff who now find themselves consigned towards the FSA. But the prospect of leaving the marbled elegance of Threadneedle Street for Docklands, and modern open plan offices, is intolerable.

Davies's problems are exacerbated by the increasing demand for compliance staff within the City. Because the compliance role has only recently evolved, there is a shortage of experienced people, which makes the regulatory authorities an obvious hunting ground. Recruits can quickly find their salaries escalating as employers struggle

to keep their compliance staff. Tricky questions arise in the area of bonuses, so crucial to the City salary.

The job of the compliance officer may entail saying no more often than yes, but, however sound the decision, a deal undone does not yield the same potential profit, for which read bonus, as does the deal that proceeds. Enter that contradictory concept of the guaranteed bonus. The FSA may find it useful.

**Korean infection travels by junk**

Korea is coming back to haunt the West. When US agencies downgrade debt of the world's eleventh biggest economy almost to junk bond status, Korean markets melt down and even Europe and North America feel the heat.

There is plenty of scope for things to get worse. Far more

than the realistic terms the IMF asked of Britain in 1976, or its schoolmasterly approach to the poor and wayward, the IMF's loan terms to Korea have the punitive tone of a treaty imposed on a defeated foe after war. Nor need Koreans speculate on conspiracy theories. Americans openly seek to use this opportunity to shackle Korea and promote Western trade interests.

That might not matter if the crisis had not struck when Korea had a lame-duck government. The package has become a key issue in next week's presidential elections. Kim Dae-jung, perpetual leader of the opposition, hints at renegotiation if he is finally swept into power and declares that some conditions simply cannot be met.

This invitation to rebel against the IMF's surrender terms makes financial markets yet more nervous. Foreign investors are hardly likely to take up the invitation to pile money in when

the won is in free fall. Should it steady and foreigners buy Korean industry at fire-sale prices, street reactions might be worse.

The West has started a new trade campaign, putting pressure on Asian trading partners through the International Labour Office and the World Trade Organisation to beef up worker rights and trade union representation. But the fruits of such efforts, were they successful, can be seen in Seoul. Powerful trade unions have made Korea's industries far less competitive and blocked economic reform, both legislatively and on the ground.

Spurred by the election debate, they will not readily accept the loss of about a million jobs, the ending of lifetime employment and the cuts in real and money wages that the IMF programme requires. If the IMF's vision of the world is to prevail, the West's efforts to promote union power in emerging economies seems rather like Germany sending

Lenin to Russia in a sealed train 80 years earlier. Not for nothing is Tony Blair's Government, a disciple of the IMF school, rapidly growing cool on union representation at home.

If Korea's epidemic of economic illnesses infects Western markets more seriously, Europe and America may regret taking their revenge through the IMF.

## Tweedie's public finance initiative

With an impeccably cute sense of timing, Sir David Tweedie, chairman of the Accounting Standards Board, has issued a dire warning over the Government's private finance initiative and the possibility of accounting treatments being applied which could mislead Parliament.

The Minister in charge of the PFI will be doubly anxious to avoid any such risks, since he is none other than Geoffrey Robinson, specially installed in that role because of his business expertise.

Sir David does not suggest that PFI might be a convenient way for the Government to channel profits from road tolls and the

like into off-shore accounts but he is concerned that the full extent of Government's financial commitment in PFI projects might not be always apparent.

The Conservatives came up with PFI as a means of bringing capital projects to fruition courtesy of private sector investment. It is the governmental equivalent of off-balance sheet finance, a device which leaves the public sector borrowing requirement happily unscathed.

But contractors have proved wary of taking on all the risk in PFI projects and the scheme has moved only slowly: around £7.5 billion of contracts have so far been committed. So Government must provide encouragement in the form of promises to make the job worthwhile, know what I mean. Sir David, quite rightly, wants to be sure that the cost of those promises shows up on the national budget.

## Troubled waters

WEST of Scotland Water stands accused by a local Labour MP of "appalling communication and slow action," after supplies were ruined by a diesel leak at its ill-named Burncrooks treatment works in Drymen. This shows the danger of quangos who fail to answer to the public. Quite so. Consumers are stuck with unaccountable quangos because self-righteous Scots insisted that their water must not be privatised as the Sassenachs' has.

## Racal falls but signals immediate intentions

By Raymond Snoddy, Media Editor

SIR Ernest Harrison, chairman of Racal Electronics, yesterday pushed ahead with plans to sell the group's loss-making Data Communications division and to "position" Racal Telecom for flotation.

He refused to speculate on what the Data Communications business might fetch or even what his hopes for a Racal Telecom flotation might be, other than to say the aim was to maximise shareholder value.

Sir Ernest was speaking as the company announced that pre-tax profit in the six months to October 10 had plunged to £9.2 million compared with £21.2 million last time mainly because of increased losses at

Data Communications from £12.5 million to £21.9 million.

Racal said the decision to sell Data Communications would leave management free to focus on remaining businesses which were all in growth areas and which had produced operating profits of £100 million in 1996-97.

Retirement was not on the horizon, Sir Ernest implied, and certainly he intended staying beyond the disposal of Data Communications and the flotation of Racal Telecom. He said: "This company has a lot of shareholder value yet to be released. I would like to make sure we achieve what we know is possible."

Racal shares rose 14p to 234p largely because of the removal of at least some of the uncertainty surrounding the company in recent years and the prospect of an end to losses from Data Communications. David Elsbury, Racal's chief executive, will travel to the US with a team of managers on Monday to help to prepare the sale of the company.

A number of interesting offers and potential partnerships for the telecom business had been received, Sir Ernest confirmed, but the board felt that flotation was the best way to get maximum value. Clearly Racal has watched the flotation of Energis, the National Grid telecommunications arm that was valued by the market at £900 million.

Michael Styles, the Credit Lyonnais analyst, now rates Racal a "buy" and suggested that in the end everything could be up for sale.

After the results meeting Sir Ernest conceded that there was going to be rationalisation in the defence electronics sector in Europe and that at one time or another Racal had been partners with most of the significant players.

Racal's turnover from ongoing operations rose 13 per cent to £446 million, with profit from ongoing operations of £51.7 million before reorganisation costs compared with £54.3 million last time.

The interim dividend is unchanged at 2.1p a share.

Tempus, page 30



Joseph Wan says Harvey Nichols will soon name the site of its third UK store and later look at the Middle East

## Harvey Nichols record fall

By Fraser Nelson

**SHARES** in Harvey Nichols yesterday suffered their sharpest-ever one-day fall after the upmarket London retailer gave warning that the strong pound is making its wares too expensive for many tourists.

The company, which relies on overseas visitors for a fifth of its business, said that sales growth had slowed to 3 per cent over the past nine weeks

after 24 per cent growth at the halfway stage.

The shares fell 11 per cent to a low of 193p, -48 per cent off last year's high.

Analysts feared that stock left on the shelves by tourists will have to be marked down in the January sales, and cut full-year profit forecasts to £13.5 million - some £2 million lower than forecasts.

The company yesterday reported pre-tax profits of £6.07 million in the first half, to

September 27, a 10 per cent improvement on last time, after a strong contribution from its new store in Leeds.

Joseph Wan, chief executive, said that the company will name the site of its third department store by the end of next month. Industry sources said it will almost certainly choose Glasgow, and possibly share a site with John Lewis.

Mr Wan added that the company will open only one

further store - expected to be in Newcastle or Manchester - and then look at expanding into the Middle East.

Its Oxo Tower restaurant, opened in September last year, made a £382,000 profit on sales of £4.04 million after a half year of being almost always fully booked.

An interim dividend of 2.1p is due on February 12, suggesting a final payout of 7p.

Tempus, page 30

## Pfizer gets £5m of tax money to spur more UK investment

By Paul Durman

THE Government is to give one of the world's wealthiest companies £5 million of taxpayers' money to encourage it to invest £109 million in expanding its medicines research centre at Sandwich, Kent.

Pfizer, the US healthcare group that has a market value of \$97 billion (£57 billion), has already invested £89 million in the UK this year, and has most of its existing 3,400 UK employees at Sandwich. Margaret Beckett, the President of the Board of Trade, defended the Government's assistance, saying: "This is exactly the kind of investment that Britain wants to attract and the kind of jobs we need, if we are not just to prosper but to survive."

The 500,000 sq ft facility will create jobs for 650 scientists and support staff. With other transport, engineering and catering work created as a spin-off, the DTI hopes the benefit for the south-east Kent economy will be about 1,000 jobs.

Simon Campbell, the vice-president responsible for Pfizer's European research and development, said the company's decision to expand in the UK had not been a foregone conclusion. Pfizer, which is investing heavily in new drug discovery as part of its bid to become the world's leading pharmaceutical group by 2001, could have located its new facilities in the US or Japan. Dr Campbell said the

£3 million from the DTI and the accompanying £2.5 million from English Partnerships, the Government's land regeneration agency, was a "significant factor" in the decision to expand the Sandwich site.

Pfizer's investment was warmly welcomed by local politicians and the business community in Kent. Michael Noar, head of representation at the Kent Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said: "This is a quality employer expanding and producing a lot of high quality jobs. It is precisely what Kent needs."

The R&D work at Sandwich helped to develop one of Pfizer's biggest selling drugs: Istin for angina and hypertension, Cardura for hypertension and benign prostatic hyperplasia, and Diflucan for treating the fungal infections suffered by AIDS patients. Pfizer won its fourth Queen's Award for Exports this year, and was recently named as the most admired pharmaceutical company by Fortune magazine.

Highlighting Britain's strength in pharmaceutical science, Mrs Beckett said five of the world's 20 top medicines were discovered and developed in the UK. Dr Campbell urged Mrs Beckett to maintain the highest standards of excellence in the universities "after the previous decade in decline in Government support for science".

## Ex-estate agent to set Galley pay

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

CAROL GALLEY, believed to be the best-paid woman in the City, will have her remuneration set by a former estate agent after the £3 billion (£1.7 billion) takeover of Merrill Lynch.

Jeffrey Peck, 50, will be in charge of overall co-ordination of Merrill's combined fund management operations overseeing £275 billion in assets. A spokesman said Ms Galley, vice-chairman of MAM, will make her investment decisions independently. Ms Galley was paid £6 million last year and last month picked up another £10 million when she sold her MAM shares to Merrill.

Under Mr Peck's stewardship, compensation levels could be cut. He has been heard to say that "bigger is not always better".

Mr Peck, who graduated from Harvard Business School before working in estate agency, joined Merrill in 1983.

## Insurers confident of meeting deadline

By Caroline Merrell

THE Association of British Insurers (ABI), the trade organisation for the life insurance industry, said yesterday that companies were on target to meet the end-of-year deadline for offering compensation to high-priority mis-selling cases.

The ABI said 89 per cent of the top priority cases - those who have retired, died or are close to retirement - had been completed by the end of November, compared with 71 per cent by the end of October. Regulators require that 90 per cent of compensation cases should be completed by the end of the year.

The ABI said figures indicated 16,056 cases still had to be

completed. Mark Boléat, ABI director-general, said: "With 16,000 cases left to be completed, product providers are on track to meet the regulators' target of 90 per cent of priority cases to be completed by the end of December."

He said attention would then shift to meeting the requirement of the next most urgent cases by the end of 1998. "At the end of November, 48 per cent of all priority cases had been completed."

However, Helen Liddell, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, emphasised that every firm was expected to honour the personal pensions review.

## Tank Engine Thomas's US drive

By Chris Ayres



Thomas: America bound

A TRIP across the Atlantic is planned for Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends after a licensing deal was signed yesterday between The Britt Allcroft Company and the Fox Family Channel.

Britt Allcroft, the London-based company which produces, distributes and licenses products based on "fictional characters, has also signed a deal for its other property, Shining Time Station.

Sharp's in the company, which owns the rights to Captain Pugwash, rose 3p to

133p yesterday. Since its high-profile flotation in November 1996, its shares have performed unevenly, reaching a high of 159p last year, then falling slightly below its 130p flotation price.

The agreement, for an undisclosed amount, involves the screening of episodes from the existing library of Shining Time Station and the new television films of Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends, currently being shot at Shepperton Studios in London. The company said

the deal would boost profits until the year 2000.

Britt Allcroft, the company's co-founder, said: "We have a strong reputation for popular quality screen storytelling with American parents and children and look forward to growing our following with a new generation of viewers on the Fox Family Channel."

She said the company had already licensed its Magic Adventures of Mumfie to Fox, and that a new series of stories was in co-production with D'Ocon Films of Barcelona.

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## STOCK MARKET



**MICHAEL CLARK**  
Stock Market Writer  
of the Year

# Far East and Dow falls put shares into reverse

FURTHER turmoil overnight in the Far East had investors in London on the run as share prices suffered sharp falls.

Down 131.1 at its worst, the FTSE 100 index closed 94.8 lower at 5,035.9. Turnover was on the low side, with a total of 690 million shares traded.

Once again, the new computerised trading system that matches buyer with seller automatically, must take part of the blame with hefty falls seen in some blue-chip stocks despite the apparent absence of any real selling pressure.

Wall Street only made matters worse, with the Dow Jones industrial average tumbling more than 160 points at one stage and adding to the unease of many investors.

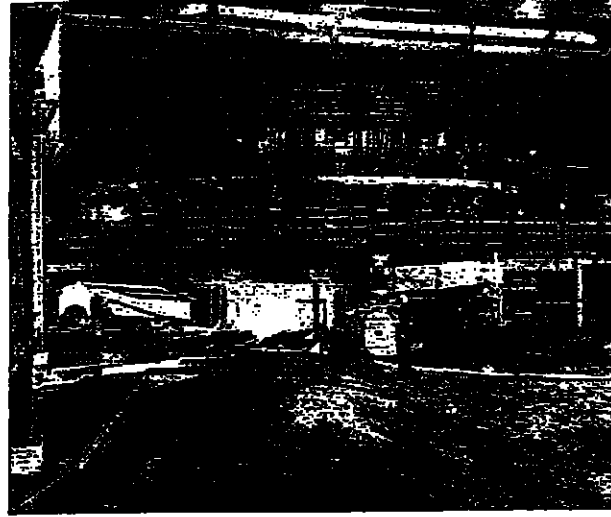
Abbey National resisted the trend with a rise of 22p to £10.35 amid claims it is about to hit the acquisition trail. General Accident, up 6p to £10.54, is being mentioned as a potential target. Abbey was also attracting positive comments from Merrill Lynch, the broker, which is believed to have upgraded its profit forecast. SBC Warburg Dillon Read, the company's own joint broker, is positive about the stock but is sticking with its profit forecast of £1.34 billion for the current year.

The proposed flotation by GEC and Alcatel of their GEC Alsthom offshore will be the biggest the City has seen for some time, with Lehman Brothers, the US securities house, putting a price tag on the business of between £3.5 billion and £4 billion. Lehman said the flotation could be worth the equivalent of 64p a share for GEC, down 4p to 401p.

A downgrade by Deutsche Morgan Grenfell from "buy" to "accumulate" left British Steel 7p off at 132p as 9.28 million shares changed hands. British Telecom was another casualty, falling 3p to 472p after ABN Amro Hoare Govett shifted its recommendation from "undervalued" to "hold".

British Energy celebrated its elevation to the top flight with a jump of 13p to 437p. It will become a constituent of the top 100 companies on December 22 and will be joined by Amvescap, 3p firmer at 488p, and Mercury Asset Management, 1p easier at £16.71.

Mercury is currently on the receiving end of an agreed £3.1



A downgrading knocked 7p off British Steel shares

billions bid from Merrill Lynch and will not become a constituent if the deal goes unconditional before then. Its place will be taken by one of the companies dropping out, such as T1 Group, down 13p to 498p. Blue Circle, unchanged at 32p, and RMC Group, down 7p to 903p. Others in the running include Nycomed Amersham, 2p dearer at £21.07, Southern Electric,

6p higher at 491p, and Compass Group, up 14p to 741p. Dresner Kleinwort Benson, the broker, continues to take a cautious view of RJB Mining, down 10p to 170p. Railtrack dropped another 53p to 943p as HSBC James Capel, the broker, urged clients to take profits.

Orange finished 1p lower at 250p as Société Générale Strauss Turnbull turned sell-

er. The latter was also urging clients to "sell" Argos, 18p off at 578p.

GKN continued loose ground, falling 17p to £12.45. It was hit earlier this week by reports of a joint venture between the French car maker Renault and NTN Corporation of Japan to produce constant velocity joints at a factory in France.

News of a bid approach lifted Triplex Lloyd 34p to 263p.

Plasmeec put on 40p to 225p after accepting terms of a 230p share offer from Arlen, the electrical equipment supplier, valuing the business at £11 million. Arlen slipped 1p to 32p.

Jarvis firmed 3p to 341p. Word is that UBS, the broker, is expected to publish a bullish review any day now setting a target of 450p.

Shield Diagnostics sported a rise of 22p to 722p. News is expected that the group has linked up with Abbott Laboratories in the US to develop its system for detecting heart ailments early on.

Autologic, the car logistics operator, was placed by Cazenove, the broker, at 250p, opened at 263p, and after touching a high for the day of 265p settled at 264p, a premium of 14p.

Shares in Syntex Group, the vehicle distributor, were placed at 250p and after briefly touching 238p, closed with a modest 11p premium at 231p.

The slide continued for Bovis Homes, 6p down at 188p. That compares with the 200p the shares were quoted at on Monday.

□ **GILT-EDGED:** Bond prices extended this week's gains as investors continued switching out of equities, outperforming European rivals with rises stretching to almost 11p. Prices closed near their best of the day.

In the futures pit, the March series of the long gilt put on £114 at £121.2 as a total of 85,000 contracts were completed.

In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2021 finished £116 higher at £121.7, while in shorts Treasury 7 per cent 2002 was £13.2 better at £101.9.

□ **NEW YORK:** Stocks plummeted on Wall Street as Asia's economic woes pushed the technology and financial sectors further along their three-day downslide. At midday the Dow Jones industrial average was down 137.01 at 7,841.78.

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	7841.78 (-137.01)
S&P Composite	954.53 (-15.28)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	16030.15 (-122.97)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	10420.22 (-263.19)
Amsterdam:	
AEX Index	883.53 (-26.77)
Sydney:	
ASX 100	2516.8 (-37.9)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	4030.16 (-81.11)
Singapore:	
Straits	1604.28 (-39.24)
Brussels:	
General	13912.44 (-194.61)
Paris:	
CAC-40	2828.45 (-101.78)
Zurich:	
SEA Gen	1225.80 (-5.20)
London:	
FTSE 100	5035.9 (-94.8)
FTSE 250	4753.8 (-15.5)
FTSE 350	2427.8 (-38.4)
FTSE Europe 100	2637.06 (-43.13)
FTSE All-Share	2771.64 (-38.52)
FTSE Non Financials	2387.57 (-31.74)
FTSE Financials	134.39 (-1.19)
FTSE Govt Secs	101.72 (+0.74)
Bulgarski	474.2
EURO Volume	903.7m
German Mark	2.9322 (-0.0119)
Exchange Index	1034.10 (-1.01)
Bank of England official rate	6.00%
LECU	1.4883
LESD	1.2181
155.6 Nov (3.7%) Jan 1998/100	100.00
158.0 Nov (2.5%) Jan 1997/100	100.00

RECENT ISSUES	
Advance UK Tst	102
Autologic	264p
BG 7p	30p
Boussard	180p
Bovis Homes	188p
CRC	130p
Capital Opps Tst	113p
Comand Comm	60
Cresco Int	153p
Firm Geared US	177
Forefront Tech Wts	25
Forefront Tech	85
Manchester & Lon	270
Market Link Publ	55
Metalsrusia	74p
Minorplanet Sys	50p
Northern Recruit	142p
Northampton Frst	70
Range Cooker Cntry	54
Rapid Technology	95p
Razorback Vehicles	102p
Savoy Asset Mgmt	113p
Scs Upholstery	113p
Seascope Shipping	253
Second Str Dr	100
Scottish Scot	74p
Syner	231p
Tetra	175p
Vanguard Med Wts	42

MAJOR CHANGES	
FI Group n/p (64c)	195
Green Prop n/p (35c)	40
RISKS	
Racal Elect	234p (+14p)
Reliance Sec	185p (+12p)
Admiral	690p (+10p)
Compass Grp	741p (+14p)
Northern Rock	535p (+10p)
Plasmeec	225p (+40p)
FALLS	
RJB	170p (-10p)
Railtrack	943p (-53p)
Christies Int	282p (-14p)
AB Food	530p (-24p)
Al Nippon Ar	250p (-11p)
Smiths Inds	850p (-34p)

Closing Prices Page 33

## TEMPUS

### Catalytic converter

AFTER the initial enthusiasm late last year, the formation of LucasVarity through the merger of Lucas Industries with Varity Corp of the US has failed to breathe new life into the shares. At 190p, they languish where they were four years ago.

The grinding out of inefficiencies, primarily in the old Lucas activities, is not the stuff of headlines. Even though steady quarterly improvements have been achieved, the shares have been depressed by currency pessimism and a feeling that a re-rating would require something dramatic — more than the change of name Victor Rice, the chief executive, had been considering.

The sale of VarityPerkins could be the catalyst. It looks like a good price and leaves Mr Rice with a war chest of up to £800 million to augment the automotive and aerospace divisions. He will undoubtedly be under pressure to make some quick buys to minimise the dilutive effect of the sale, arranged before the company is even close to completing its strategic review.

There was some disappointment yesterday with the news that the electronic unit injector (EUI) diesel injection system will not be put into production for Volkswagen, although delays in announcing a firm go-ahead had led analysts, who say the technology got superseded, to expect problems. LucasVarity says it is unlikely that there will need to be a provision for this curtailment.

The shares barely moved yesterday and will await evidence of Mr Rice's success in acquisitions. An update on the strategy review will be at the end of March. Hold until then, unless a big deal is made in the meantime.

## Racal

THERE was an audible sigh of relief yesterday when Racal Electronics confirmed its well-trailled decision to sell the loss-making Data Communications division and "position" Racal Telecom for flotation.

The City had been advising Sir Ernest Harrison to rid himself of the burden of the Florida-based company for some time so could hardly complain when he finally took their advice.

Uncertainty remains, however. Sir Ernest was short on detail yesterday about what his hopes are for the sale or how a flotation could turn out. That inevitably means that the shares at this moment remain a bit of a punt until more hard information becomes available. If, as many have been suggesting, Racal is worth more than the

## Harvey Nichols

THE Bollinger corks that flew into the air when Harvey Nichols floated last year are now returning back to earth to batter the heads of those who imagined they were buying into a classier version of Marks & Spencer.

This year the shares have fallen from a high of 352p and yesterday's news of a modest uplift in pre-tax profits to £6 million from £5.5 million in the six months to September left the stock another 23p lower at 193p.

The company has now lost about a third of its market value since flotation, as it became an unlikely victim of the soaring pound because of heavy dependence on the tourist trade.

But with the shares trading at just 13 times forecast earnings, the drop looks overdone. London tourists may have taken the fizz out of the results this time, but the scope for homegrown success is substantial. The Leeds

sum of its parts then it is relatively easy to get to a £3 share price.

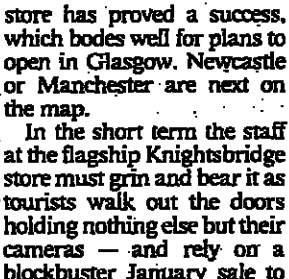
The company was able to point to strong and improving performance in everything from defence radar and avionics to instrumentation and recording.

A few cynical voices could be heard in the analyst community last night on the

exact provenance of this year's £100 million of operational profit from continuing businesses.

Sir Ernest is known as a proud and rather stubborn man and he is probably worth an each-way bet on being able to sort out the mess — or as he puts it release more shareholder value — before he bows out.

## Let's Demerge Again



emerged that it was involved in a £28 million (£1 million) wool-spinning joint venture in Australia.

This spinning venture might be a surprise to shareholders, as the deal was announced in Australia yesterday morning but failed to appear on the Stock Exchange's Company Information Service. Also shareholders might wonder how much the £16 million Nottingham project is really costing — as there are rumours, denied by the company, of it being up to £4 million over budget.

## Parkland

WHAT is happening at Parkland Group? This used to be a boring old Bradford woolen company. But under chief executive Bryan Lodder it has taken on some big ideas for expansion — building a massive new spinning plant in Nottingham; and yesterday it

emerged that it was involved in a £28 million (£1 million) wool-spinning joint venture in Australia.

This spinning venture might be a surprise to shareholders, as the deal was announced in Australia yesterday morning but failed to appear on the Stock Exchange's Company Information Service. Also shareholders might wonder how much the £16 million Nottingham project is really costing — as there are rumours, denied by the company, of it being up to £4 million over budget.

There are suggestions in the City that it might be Mr Lodder's folly given his obsession with high-technology investment being the way to beat low-cost producers from the Far East.

However the market is not all that convinced. It has marked down the shares sharply this week, leaving them at 145p compared with more than 200p earlier this year. These shares have further to fall.

COMMODITIES	
LIFTS	
Dec 1000 BBD	1204 BBD
Mar 1126-1128	1213-1215
May 1190 BBD	1200
Sep 1190 BBD	1200
Dec 1190 BBD	1200
Dec 1190 BBD	1200
ROBUSTA COFFEE (B)	
Jan 1820-1817	1770 BBD
Mar 1820-1817	1770 BBD
May 1770-1770	1770 BBD
Sep 1770-1770	1770 BBD
Dec 1770-1770	1770 BBD
WHITE SUGAR (FOB)	
Dec 300.5-301	300.5-301
Mar 300.5-301	300.5-301
May 300.5-301	300.5-301
Sep 300.5-301	300.5-301
Dec 300.5-301	300.5-301
MEAT & LIVESTOCK	
Dec 1120-1120	1120-1120
Mar 1120-1120	1120-1120
May 1120-1120	1120-1120
Sep 1120-1120	1120-1120
Dec 1120-1120	1120-1120

COMMODITIES	
LIFE WHEAT	
Dec 1000 BBD	1204 BBD
Mar 1126-1128	1213-1215
May 1190 BBD	1200
Sep 1190 BBD	1200
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Sep 300.5-301	300.5-301
Dec 300.5-301	300.5-301
MEAT & LIVESTOCK	
Dec 1120-1120	1120-1120
Mar 1120-1120	1120-1120
May 1120-1120	1120-1120
Sep 1120-1120	1120-1120
Dec 1120-1120	1120-1120

COMMODITIES	
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Dec 300.5-301	300.5-301
MEAT & LIVESTOCK	
Dec 1120-1120	1120-1120
Mar 1120-1120	1120-1120
May 1120-1120	1120-1120
Sep 1120-1120	1120-1120
Dec 1120-1120	1120-1120

COMMODITIES	
LIFE WHEAT	
Dec 1000 BBD	1204 BBD
Mar 1126-1128	1213-1215
May 1190 BBD	1200
Sep 1190 BBD	1200
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Dec 1190 BBD	1200
ROBUSTA COFFEE (B)	
Jan 1820-1817	1770 BBD
Mar 1820-1817	1770 BBD
May 1770-1770	1770 BBD
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Dec 1770-1770	1770 BBD
WHITE SUGAR (FOB)	
Dec 300.5-301	300.5-301
Mar 300.5-301	300.5-301
May 300.5-301	300.5-301
Sep 300.5-301	300.5-301
Dec 300.5-301	300.5-301
MEAT & LIVESTOCK	
Dec 1120-1120	1120-1120
Mar 1120-1120	1120-1120
May 1120-1120	1120-1120
Sep 1120-1120	1120-1120
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COMMODITIES	
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# Reviewing a tempestuous year before the storm subsides

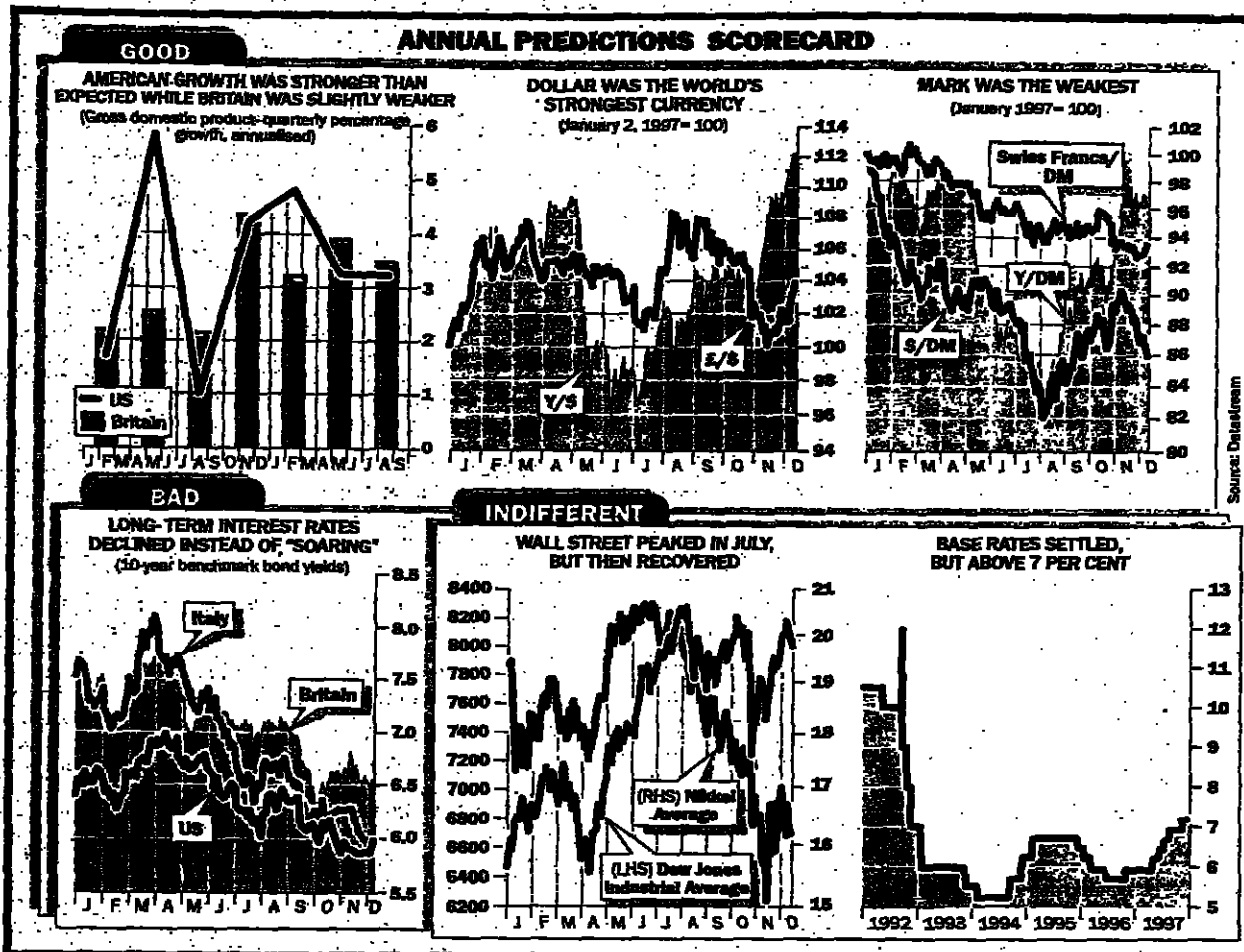
Asian turmoil contains 'long-term' lessons about flexibility for Brown

Christmas seems to be coming earlier every year, unless you happen to own a shop on Britain's surprisingly deserted high streets. Hard-pressed retailers have been finding out the hard way not to put too much trust in City economic forecasts. The "consumer boom" anticipated by so many economic commentators has turned out to be neither a bonanza nor, as one of the City's most prominent forecasters predicted exactly a year ago, an inflationary "nightmare" — just a damp squib. My reason for raising this touchy subject is not (yet) to pour scorn on some of my colleagues in the crystal-ball business. It is simply to explain the apparently premature timing of this article.

Since this is my last *Economic View* before Christmas, it must, as usual, be devoted to reviewing the financial and economic predictions I made in January for 1997. One of the unforeseen advantages of succumbing to family pressure and taking an extra week's holiday in December is that this premature review of 1997 can also look forward a bit to the remaining days of the year — a period that could be as momentous as in living memory for the financial markets.

Let us begin, then, by seeing how this month's key events — the collapse of Asia and the financial stabilisation package due next week in Japan — relate to the forecasts made here a year ago. Japan, pressured by events in the rest of Asia as much as by the meltdown in its own financial system, seems finally to be on the brink of a gigantic policy U-turn.

A government that had threatened to destroy the Japanese economy with its pre-Keynesian war against public borrowing seems finally to be on the point of capitulation. Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Prime Minister, is preparing to throw hundreds of billions of dollars of public money at Japan's bank depositors and consumers. Whatever the numbers officially attached to next week's announcements, the final cost is bound to be much higher and will probably result in a doubling of the Japanese national debt. The result should be a massive stimulus to domestic demand in Japan and, eventually, a rebound by the yen and the Tokyo stock market. For the world as a whole, an economic recovery in Japan could well outweigh the depressing effects of the crisis in the rest of Asia, as well as making it much easier for Asian nations



to help themselves. To what extent were such momentous events anticipated a year ago? The bad news (for any readers rash enough to follow this column's guidance) is that 1997 was the first year since 1994 in which I did not pour scorn on the fat managers who were pouring money into Hong Kong and other Asian markets. I did return to Asia-bashing in late August, when the Hang Seng index was still within 5 per cent of its peak. Nevertheless, the omission of any bearish comments on emerging Asia was certainly a black mark against my January forecast.

On Japan, by contrast, last January's analysis was about right. I said that the Japanese economy was poised for recovery, if and only if the Ministry of Finance abandoned its policy of fiscal *hara kiri*. If the planned fiscal tightening went ahead "the economy would fall back into recession, parts of the financial system would collapse and the stock market would crash back to its 1995 low" (which it did last month). If, on the other hand, the bureaucrats relented, the yen would stabilise in the Y120 to Y130 range and the stock market could jump by 20 or 30 per cent.

My big mistake was in expecting the Japanese to see reason before they were actually struck by disaster. The Japanese have again justified their reputation for inflexibility and narrow-mindedness — all symptoms of the determination and "long-termism" beloved by Gordon Brown. But now that deflationary measures do seem to be on the horizon, the markets may finally vindicate last January's unhelpfully paradoxical prediction: "Tokyo shares are

likely to fall sharply or to rise sharply — or quite possibly to do both". On the other main stock markets, the year's forecasts were equally a curate's egg. Taken in isolation, my main prediction that Wall Street (along with London) was in for a year of directionless trading was obviously wrong. A minor mitigation was my insistence that the widely feared crash on Wall Street remained the least likely prospect, since shares were only modestly overvalued with the Dow Jones industrial average at 6,600. I also added in last January's prediction that a "more dra-

**Jeremiahs who predicted a dangerously inflationary boom were proved wrong**

matic" alternative was possible for Wall Street, with another big gain of 20 per cent or so followed, after the summer, by an equally sharp fall. Once it became apparent that the bull market was determined to move higher, I pointed this out in an article on this page on February 18 and stuck firmly to this bullish opinion, until finally turning bearish, for the first time since 1994, in mid-July. Although the savage sell-off on October 27 did seem to justify my conversion to the bearish camp, the bulls have proved far more resilient than I had expected. In fact, although the Dow peaked at

8,259 on August 6 and London's FTSE 100 index peaked on October 8 at 5,330, the best indicator of conditions on Wall Street, the Standard & Poor's Composite, managed to beat its August record, albeit by a tiny margin, as recently as last Friday (December 5). Happily for the bears, though, stock markets around the world have retreated decisively since then, partly under pressure from events in Korea. With almost three weeks to go before the end of the year, there may be no chance of equity prices returning to anywhere near the level of 6,600 on the Dow at which they started 1997; but they could still lose a considerable amount of their 20 per cent gain.

Turning now to my other main financial predictions, it is easier to make some clear assessments. Continuing a pattern established over the past eight years, the best calls were on currencies while the worst ones were on bonds. On currencies, I correctly predicted that the dollar would strengthen against all-comers. Sterling would run a close second but would have trouble breaking above \$1.70, a level which, in fact, the pound has in fact tested without success three times this year. I also said that the world's weakest currency would be the mark, that the yen would stabilise between Y120 and Y130, and defied conventional wisdom by suggesting that the mark would weaken, even against the "friendless Swiss franc".

Sadly, this good luck on currencies was offset by my egregious misjudgment on bonds. Long-term interest rates, instead of "soaring", as I expected, have fallen all over the world — and especially in

the market I singled out for the biggest jump in yields, Italy. I misunderstood the new-found ability of Italy to maintain a stable government, as well as the extraordinary competitiveness of its industry, which allowed the country to tolerate a savage fiscal deflation with only a minor economic downturn. I also thought that Germany would fight harder to keep Italy out of EMU.

More broadly, I again underestimated the strength of global disinflationary forces. Even though I was right about the economic expansions in America, Germany and France all being slightly stronger than consensus forecasts, this growth put no upward pressure on either inflation or interest rates. The question of whether such benign trends can continue I will leave to the predictions for next year. Turning finally to Britain, the forecasts were close enough. Britain was the strongest economy in the G7, but the Jeremiahs who predicted a dangerously inflationary consumer boom did prove wrong. Fiscal policy was tightened under Labour; the dividend imputation system was abolished; and the pound did move back into its old ERM zone (in fact, of course, it went much higher than I dared to imagine). My main error was to suggest that the market tightening expected under Labour "would be enough to keep base rates at 7 per cent or below". In fact, of course, the Bank of England has pushed rates up to 7.25 per cent. I do, however, feel more confident than ever that interest rates are unlikely to rise above this level for a long time to come. Further predictions, for what they are worth, should appear in this column on January 9.

## Myerson must close unstable door before Liberty horse bolts

Paul Durman looks at the squabbling over the future and direction of the store's business

It is, once again, a trying time for Liberty's "ordinary" shareholders — those that cannot claim any connection with Arthur Lasenby Liberty, the department store's founder, and who do not harbour any ambitions to "re-release shareholder value" by turning out the chairman.

For whatever the eventual consequences of yesterday's vote to remove Denis Cassidy as chairman, it is hard to see Liberty being able to sustain any degree of corporate stability for long. The make-up of the share register — split between passionate but divided family shareholders, financiers on the make, and uninterested institutional holdings — is a recipe for continued squabbling over the future and direction of the business.

The appointment of Brian Myerson and Odile Griffith to the board can only delay the solution of Liberty's biggest problem — how to improve its landmark store on the corner of Regent Street and Great Marlborough Street. Like Staple Inn Hall, the London venue for yesterday's extraordinary meeting of shareholders, the present neo-Tudor store is hot, crowded and difficult to move around.

Mr Myerson and Ms Griffith readily accept the board's argument that "doing nothing is not an option". However, with the possibility of the resignations of Ian Thomson, Liberty's managing director, and Andrew Garey, finance director, along with those of the company's City advisers, their first task must be to try to put an end to the uncertainty and confusion.

Friction between Liberty's shareholders and directors has become a familiar pattern since Mr Myerson first appeared on the scene in the summer of

1991. Mr Myerson, the South African investor who controls a 16.9 per cent stake in Liberty, has led the attack on Mr Cassidy, just as he previously led the attack on the previous management team that included Oliver and Richard Stewart-Liberty. Five years ago, Mr Myerson rallied against the "pedestrian" family management. Now the Stewart-Liberty, headed by their stepmother Elizabeth, are his allies in this latest push.

The impressions created are that Mr Myerson chooses his friends according to expedience and that the Stewart-Liberty are reluctant to let go of "their" company. As Mr Cassidy and his Liberty colleagues have repeatedly suggested in recent weeks, this does not look like the basis of a stable and continuing relationship.

The family have disowned any intention to resume a management role. But doubts linger. When Mr Myerson forced him off the board two years ago, Oliver Stewart-Liberty is said to have told his supporters: "Don't worry, we'll be back."

Mr Myerson, reasonably enough, would like to show a profit on an investment, currently worth £13.5 million, that he has had tied up for six years. Few doubt that the family care about Liberty's business in a

way that Mr Myerson would find unimaginable. Whether they know what is needed to return it to prosperity, and whether they are prepared for his solutions, is another matter. To the obvious irritation of some investors, Mr Myerson and Ms Griffith, refused to set out their plans yesterday or to state what relevant experience they might be able to offer Liberty on being appointed to the board. As one said: "It's quite unacceptable that Mr Myerson and Ms Griffith should decline to say what their proposals are for this company or indeed what they know about retailing."

The Myerson/Stewart-Liberty concert party has made some minor criticisms about the lack of progress in Liberty's results since Mr Cassidy took over as chairman in April 1995.

But the main reason for their losing confidence in Mr Cassidy is supposed to be the £43 million cost of redeveloping the Regent Street store. The facts are disputed: Mr Myerson seemed to be quite comfortable with a £40 million redevelopment earlier this summer.

For all Mr Myerson's activity, Liberty's share price today is little different to what it was when he started buying the shares six years ago.

The simplest solution, which would also put an end to the warring, would be to accept an offer from one of the interested purchasers recently solicited by Barings. Although Mr Cassidy said several expressions of interest have been received, Mr Myerson and the Stewart-Liberty have said selling the company now would be "wholly inappropriate" and "ill-conceived".

### More savers to face tax than government figures suggest

From Mr. W. R. Whittle

Sir, In "Commentary", December 3, you refer to the Government's now reduced figures.

It may be impossible to quantify the number of people with Peps to the value of more than £50,000 due to individuals having them

with several different managers.

May I suggest that next time you refer to the number of people adversely affected, you mention that this will be much higher due to National Savings, friendly society investments and other tax-free investments being included in the limit. I suspect that the

total will be sufficient to the electorally significant.

No one seems to have even suspected that National Savings would be included, as those have always been totally separate for tax purposes. Yours faithfully, W. R. WHITTLE, 23 Haslem Crescent, Kinnoull, Perth.

### Airport priorities

From Sir Terence Conran

Sir, I am delighted that Simon Sperry has highlighted the pressures on the UK's air transport system (letter, December 9). However, if BAA's considerable energy and ex-

pertise were focused on running air terminals rather than shopping centres, the company could clear out its retail tenants. In releasing this space, the overcrowding problems would disappear, but so would most of BAA's profits. This is, of course, the dilemma created by this particular

privatisation. Was BAA expected to run the nation's air terminals efficiently, or was it privatised to make as much money as possible out of some legal loopholes? Yours faithfully, SIR TERENCE CONRAN, Shad Thames, SE1.

## Derailed

THE Corporation of London should today decide to oppose the Thameslink 2000, the £750 million cross-London project, which will cause huge disruption to City commuters while bringing few benefits to anyone except those keen to travel from Southern to Eastbourne. The Corporation wants a public inquiry, while the public has until the middle of January to make any views known. Reaction promises to be vociferous — a leaflet drop at Moorgate prompted a huge response from passengers.

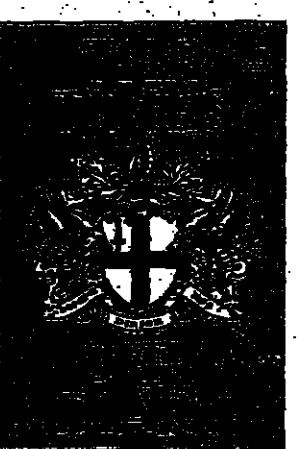


"Where there's carrot and coriander broth, son, there's brass"

All the above is fact. Where we run into difficulty is trying to assess just what the damage will be once next summer's public inquiry waves the line through. (You didn't think there could be any other outcome, did you?) Overground services from Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire into Moorgate will certainly be stopped, requiring passengers to get out somewhere in Camden.

The main question is over blackfrisks. Railtrack has the right to close the station for 95 weeks, or 26 months depending on which document you read. It is the company's responsibility to raise the question why it needs the right in the first place. Blackfrisks will close for four weeks — or perhaps less. At other times during construction at the station, five per cent of trains will be stopped short at Elephant & Castle perhaps. Oh, and Railtrack promises to keep disruption to a minimum. For what that's worth.

□ A SEASONAL research note predicts the end of the Christmas season, "Peace on Earth and Good-



will to All Men," it starts, before going on to consider the treatment of goodwill and intangible assets. How festive. Except that it is swiftly followed by a retraction. It seems "Peace on Earth..." contains an error. "Please disregard the previous version." And a rotten Christmas to you, too.

### Flag down

IF YOU found your trip to and from lunch in the City even more irksome than usual yesterday, I can tell you why. Computer Cab, the centralised booking system used by London cabbies that allows big users to summon cabs electronically, collapsed, and its operators were forced to

send juvenile runners around the big merchant banks with mobile phones to relay orders to headquarters. This was the system that almost came to the stock market earlier this year. "Couldn't float it, now they can't even work the thing," was my cabbie's response.

### French leave

THE future of the Grosvenor House Hotel is made no clearer this week by the departure of Peter French, the high-profile general manager. Ever since the Exclusive hotel was officially taken off the market earlier this year, Granada has been working behind the scenes to persuade would-be buyers to hand over some £350 million. Latest indications are of a two-hour race between the Emir of Qatar and a Hong Kong-listed conglomerate.

A Forte mole assumes me French's exit has no implications for the sale. "Nothing has changed. If somebody came up with a firm offer at the right price, we'd consider it, but Peter's departure has no hidden message."

### Bolly-wood

WAR has broken out between the LVMH and Bollinger champagne dynasties over, of all things, the new James

Bond film. *Tomorrow Never Dies* opens in the UK today and it seems the film and its morose predecessors feature huge profits for Bollinger. Free, unusually in these days of product placement deals, Nové LVMH, which makes Veuve Clicquot among others, is offering to pay for use of its champagne in future films. No chance, it seems. Ghislain de Montgolfier, who now runs the house of Bollinger, comments: "We are great and old friends of the producers of the Bond films, and particularly the late Cubby Broccoli. There's never been any question of Bollinger paying."

MARTIN WALLER



Tomorrow never dies for Pierce Brosnan and a bottle of bubbly



## Above average interest from Midland

TESSA 7.75% Tax Free			Follow up TESSA 7.75% Tax Free		
Exchequer 90 Day Notice	Gross %	Net %	Exchequer 30 Day Notice	Gross %	Net %
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£10,000+	6.20	4.96	£5,000+	4.75	3.80
£25,000+	6.40	5.12	£10,000+	5.00	4.00
£50,000+	6.50	5.20	£25,000+	5.50	4.40
£100,000+	6.70	5.36	£50,000+	6.00	4.80
£250,000+	6.85	5.48			
Monthly Interest			Monthly Interest		
Gross %	Net %		Gross %	Net %	
Up to £10,000	5.85	4.68	Up to £5,000	4.17	3.33
£10,000+	6.04	4.83	£5,000+	4.65	3.72
£25,000+	6.22	4.97	£10,000+	4.89	3.91
£50,000+	6.32	5.05	£25,000+	5.37	4.29
£100,000+	6.51	5.20	£50,000+	5.85	4.68
£250,000+	6.65	5.32			
Meridian Savings (Instant Access)			Saver Plus (Instant Access)		
Gross %	Net %		Gross %	Net %	
Up to £10,000	4.65	3.72	Up to £5,000	4.21	3.36
£10,000+	4.89	3.91	£5,000+	4.70	3.76
£25,000+	5.37	4.29	£10,000+	4.94	3.95
£50,000+	5.85	4.68	£25,000+	5.43	4.34
			£50,000+	5.92	4.73

These rates are effective from 5 January 1998

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# Adaptec and Eutelstat head for satellite/PC link

BY RAYMOND SNODDY  
MEDIA EDITOR

ADAPTEC, the California communications technology company, yesterday signed an agreement with Eutelstat, the European satellite organisation, which will bring closer the day when vast quantities of data are broadcast directly to PCs.

Eutelstat has ordered the first batch of Satellite Express PC receiver cards,

which will enable the full text of a broadsheet newspaper to be "squirted" down to a PC in a few seconds. The cards, which are likely to cost less than \$300 (£180), are expected to be available from November.

Eutelstat explained that it was already delivering information digitally by satellite for clients such as the Paris bourse, and said the new cards were the first to be fully compatible with the international standard on

digital data broadcasting. Adaptec expects data satellite broadcasting to begin to take off in 1998 although business, rather than residential use, is likely to come first.

Digital data broadcasting, Adaptec believes, can offer enormous savings over other forms of data delivery. Adaptec says that to send the amount of information on a CD-Rom to 10,000 people would take two days and cost \$2.7 million. The same

information over the most sophisticated business lines would still cost \$3,000.

To reach 10,000 users by satellite, the company claims, would involve a marginal cost of £25.

Eutelstat is ordering the first batches of the receiver cards from Adaptec to get the market going but then expects increasing competition to develop to force the price down. Adaptec hopes that business users

will come forward for the system, users such as supermarket groups which need to update prices nationwide every day.

Individual PC users can leave the system on all the time without incurring telephone charges and have the top 80 or so Internet sites regularly broadcast to them. They can then call up the information delivered to the computer memory in "real time".

## Shares rise at Triplex as talks are confirmed

BY GEORGE SIVELL

SHARES in Triplex Lloyd, the West Midlands engineer, rose from 229½p to 263½p yesterday after the company admitted that it was in takeover talks.

Triplex said the approach valued it at about 280p a share, or £186 million. The company said it had signed a confidentiality agreement with the potential bidder and would not be giving any further details.

This week Triplex had denied it was in takeover talks with Doncasters, the Midlands engineer, or indeed anyone.

Even before yesterday's surge the shares were standing at a five-year high despite a mixed history this year which has seen the departure of the chief executive after an apparent boardroom disagreement and the failure of the £75 million bid for William Cook, the rival castings group.

Failure to win the bid for William Cook, which is based in Sheffield, cost Triplex £2.1 million. Triplex was trumped during the bid battle by a Cook management offer of £79 million, an amount that proved too much for Triplex to top.

Graham Lockyer announced his departure as chief executive in July after what were described as differences of opinion about strategic direction.

In October Triplex declared that it had ended discussions with a potential bidder, saying:

"After careful consideration of the company's position and prospects the board concluded that such discussions were unlikely to lead to an offer capable of being recommended to shareholders and discussions have effectively terminated."

This statement convinced the City that the company was in play as a takeover target and that in time a hostile bidder would emerge.

This time round Triplex advisers believe that 280p a share is a price that is at least worth talking about although they emphasise that they are only talking.

Analysts believe, however, that Triplex is vulnerable to a bid. The group is yet to announce a new chief executive and Bob Mitchell, finance director, has filled the post since July. At the half-year results presentation last month Triplex promised a new appointment within two months.

On strategy Triplex merely said it was 3 per cent geared and looking for "bolt-on" acquisitions of about £20 million in its second half. The company dismissed criticisms that it lacked strategic direction.

Pre-tax profit rose from £6.25 million to £7.6 million in the six months to September 30. Analysts expect £17 million before tax for the full year.



Looking ahead: Michael Jeffries, left, chief executive of WS Atkins, the consultancy and support services company, and Alan Rudge, chairman, said the level of work secured in the first half of the year exceeded targets and that the trend had continued into the second half.

The company was reporting a rise in pre-tax profit to £12.7 million (£10.7 million) in the six months to September 30. Earnings increased to 8.4p per share from 7p and the interim dividend is lifted to 2.7p from 2.25p. The shares rose 7½p to 357½p yesterday.

## Takeover speculation spurs DLJ price

FROM OLIVER AUGUST  
IN NEW YORK

DONALDSON, LUFKIN & JENNETTE, the eighth largest US investment bank, has become the focus of persistent takeover talk that has boosted its share price by more than 10 per cent this week.

The most likely bidders are said to be Chase Manhattan Bank and Dresdner Kleinwort Benson. Chase Manhattan, the leading US commercial bank with an expanding investment banking arm, is believed to be conducting due diligence on DLJ.

Dresdner is also said to be in the advanced stages of takeover negotiations. USA Today reported yesterday that Hansgeorg Hoffmann, Dresdner's head of investment banking, has held talks with John Chalsty, DLJ's executive chairman. At the meeting Mr Chalsty is said to have embraced the idea of an alliance with Kleinwort Benson, the UK house acquired by Dresdner.

DLJ is worth about £3 billion. It recently expanded its London operations and moved into new offices at 99 Bishopsgate together with Phoenix, the mergers and acquisitions boutique it owns. DLJ shares soared 25 per cent during the last two weeks.

But whether DLJ wants to sell remains unclear. Equitable, the insurance group that owns 73 per cent of DLJ, declined to comment. Joseph Malone, the Equitable president, recently said he wanted to keep DLJ because it had become a "core business". Insurance companies are increasingly offering a full range of financial services.

## BUSINESS ROUNDUP

### Siemens predicts 15% rise in profits

SIEMENS, the German engineering company, yesterday forecast that its net profits will rise by 15 per cent in the year to next September, to exceed DM3 billion (£1.02 billion). The company, which employs 386,000 people, said that sales and the value of orders taken would rise by up to 6 per cent. Siemens expects the value of orders taken to amount to between DM110 billion and DM115 billion.

The company said that the recovery of the German economy "has been marked since the end of the 1996-97 year" and was boosting the industrial and computer divisions. However, as had been the case in the current year, the main force would come from abroad, particularly the Asia-Pacific zone. Heinrich von Pierer, the company's president, said that local devaluations would enable Siemens to improve its competitive position, particularly in component factories in Malaysia and Singapore. In 1996-97 Siemens had disposed of assets worth nearly DM5.5 billion; the main sales had been in the sectors of military electronics and dental equipment.

### Arlen bids for Plasmec

ARLEN has launched an agreed £11.01 million takeover bid for Plasmec, a fellow manufacturer of electronic components. Arlen is offering 230p in cash for each Plasmec share, against Wednesday's closing price of 185p, with a loan note alternative. Last month Plasmec told shareholders that 1997 profits would fall short of expectations, blaming intense competition in its markets, compounded by the strength of the pound. In 1996 the company earned pre-tax profits of £1.29 million on sales of £14.76 million.

### Morgan acquisitions

MORGAN CRUCIBLE, the engineer, has made four acquisitions. W. Haldenwanger Technische Keramik, a maker of ceramic and porcelain products based in Germany, is being bought for up to £22.1 million. Morris Compressor of Texas, a supplier of piston rings, is being bought for £4.4 million. Zambelli, an Italian distributor of Morgan's thermal ceramics products, is being bought for £2.5 million. An £3 million majority stake in Carbo San Luis, of Argentina, provides a new distribution outlet for these products.

### Citibank agreement

CITIBANK has agreed to buy the Global Trust and Agency Services business of JP Morgan, the US investment bank, for an undisclosed sum. The deal will bring a portfolio of 12,000 European issues and an additional 500 clients to Citibank, allowing the bank to claim a 28 per cent share of the European debt market. Together with Citibank's own 1,000-strong client list, the acquisition, which needs regulatory approval, will propel the bank into the leading position in the global custody market. Citibank said.

### SHL betters forecast

SHARES in SHL, the psychometric testing group, rose from 257½p to 265½p after it revealed a rise in pre-tax profits of 17 per cent to £9.1 million in the year to September 30. The figure tops the £9 million forecast at the time of flotation in October. Sales rose 31 per cent to £41.9 million and earnings rose 9 per cent to 13.14p. A one-off exceptional charge of £11.3 million covers the cost of issuing shares to employees from January 1994 to September 1997. The first dividend to be paid after flotation is to be the interim in the current financial year.

### Increase for Galen

GALEN HOLDINGS, the pharmaceutical group, increased pre-tax profits by 58 per cent to £11.4 million in the year to September 30, on sales up 26 per cent to £39.3 million. Earnings rose from 5.3p to 8p, out of which a final dividend of 0.37p will be paid. The company estimates that it would have paid a 1.1p final had it been listed for the full financial year. Allen McClay, the chairman, said that he was confident that 1997-98 will be another good year for the company. The shares rose from 287½p to 298½p.

### Alvis slips into reverse

ALVIS, the manufacturer of military vehicles, said yesterday that its current order book was worth more than £500 million after the £84 million acquisition of Hägglunds Vehicle, the Scandinavian company, earlier this year. Alvis was reporting a fall in pre-tax profits to £8.1 million from £8.9 million in the year to September 30, on turnover of £72.9 million (£90.4 million). Earnings fell to 7.8p per share from 10.1p. But the total dividend is increased to 3.5p a share from 3p, with a 2.25p (2p) final that is payable on February 27.

### Forth in Finnish move

FORTH PORTS has reached agreement with three Finnish companies to develop and operate a dedicated Finnish terminal at the London port of Tilbury. Facilities will cost about £20 million and are designed to handle more than 650,000 tonnes of paper products and general cargo a year. The agreement has been reached with UPM-Kymmene, Metsä-Serla and Myllykoski Paper. Construction will start early in the new year and will take 12 months to complete, Forth Ports said.

### Countryside recovers

PRE-TAX profit at Countryside Properties, the residential group, recovered to £9.3 million from £11 million in the year to September 30, though profits are still short of the £10.6 million earned in 1995. Turnover rose to a record £196 million (£160 million). During the year the company, which operates in the South East, sold 843 new homes at an average price of £126,000 (£129,000), and completed 775 new homes for housing associations. Earnings rose to 10.6p (3.4p) a share. The final dividend of 2p a share makes a total of 3p (2.25p).

AN EXCLUSIVE OFFER

THE TIMES

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This week *The Times* has teamed up with Vodafone to offer readers an unbeatable, no strings attached, mobile phone in time for Christmas. It consists of an award-winning Telital phone, pre-loaded with 30 days' service and up to two-and-a-half hours of off-peak calls, plus a free voucher worth £15 — a total of 60 days' service and up to five hours of free calls. You also receive a battery giving 90 minutes' talktime and 18 hours' standby plus a desktop battery charger — all for £99.99 inc. Vat. That is a special saving to *Times* readers of £15. The offer makes an ideal gift — there is no age restriction, no written contract, no credit checks, no monthly bills. You stay in control and just Pay As You Talk.

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CHANGING TIMES

## Daily Mail 68% up as newsprint cost declines

BY OUR MEDIA EDITOR

RISE in advertising revenue and the falling price of newsprint underpinned a 68 per cent rise in pre-tax profits, to £143.7 million, for Daily Mail & General Trust in the year to September 30.

Analysts suggested yesterday that building society windfalls may also have contributed to a particularly strong second half for the national titles, the *Daily Mail* and *The Mail on Sunday*.

DMGT said that the new financial year had started well, with advertising revenue remaining strong in the UK and the prospect of a stable newsprint price for the year. "Much will depend on the wellbeing of the UK economy and especially of recruitment advertising, which, while currently buoyant, has been known to turn down very quickly," DMGT said. Another factor will be the performance of acquisitions made over the past two years.

DMGT said that all its divisions had improved profits substantially over the past year, with operating profit overall rising by 82 per cent, to

£159.6 million, on turnover up by 19 per cent, to £1.2 billion.

With some analysts having suggested figures as low as £120 million pre-tax profits for this year, the DMGT share price rose yesterday, the ordinary shares going up 92½p to £19.67 and the "A" stock climbing 67½p to £18.75.

Advertising at Associated Newspapers was up by 12 per cent overall with the average price of newsprint 18 per cent lower. Northcliffe Newspapers, the DMGT regional division, produced a record trading profit with eight of its daily titles and all of its weekly titles showing circulation rises in the January-to-June period.

DMGT noted that all three divisions of Harmsworth Media — business media, broadcasting and publishing — had expanded through acquisition. In broadcasting, the Adelaide speech station, SAA, remained in loss. However, in the UK the acquisition of a further 30 per cent of Teletext, the commercial teletext service, taking DMGT's stake to 75 per cent, had "transformed" the trading profits of the division.

## Licensing group nets soccer deal

BY JASON NISSE

COPYRIGHT Promotions, which has a portfolio of characters that includes the Pink Panther, Mr Men and Dennis the Menace, has signed a deal to license products for the next European Championships in 2000.

The move follows the investment in Copyright by ISL, the Swiss international sports marketing group. It took a 22.5 per cent holding earlier this year and plans to increase this to 29.7 per cent.

The company also said that Richard Dunn, the former chief executive of Thames Television, is to become non-executive chairman, replacing

David Williams, the financier who demerged the group from Mosaic Investments.

The group made only £62,000 in profit in the six months to October 31 on turnover of £9.1 million. This was an improvement on the performance for the same period last year when it lost £86,000. The group was held back by a disappointing half in the creative design operation.

A loss per share of 0.85p was turned into earnings of 0.61p. However, the company has passed on the interim dividend, having paid 0.5p at the halfway stage last year.

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## The Getty finds money can't buy love

It's the chippy British, not the big-hearted Americans, who are supposed to snipe at ostentatious displays of do-gooding. So what do we find in Los Angeles? Nothing less than a tide of resentment brought about by the most lavish act of cultural patronage in history. Which only goes to prove that, when it comes to the art world, the hand that feeds, national barriers count for nothing.

But I get ahead of myself. First you must gawp at the stats. Next Tuesday the J. Paul Getty Centre opens for the first time, on a hilltop high above the San Diego Freeway. The product of a £700-million building project, it is the costliest art gallery on Earth. Amazed numbers will stroll through 10,000 newly planted trees in 100 acres of gardens, commanding the loveliest views in California, before entering magnificent halls cloaked in pure marble — 30,000 tons of the shiny stuff, to be exact, shipped at vast expense from Italy.

Inside these pavilions, designed by Richard Meier, visitors will

gasp at the finest art that an annual acquisitions budget of £150 million has been able to assemble in 15 years of raids on the world's auction rooms. All this will be offered to the public without a dime of public money having been spent. Who could possibly carp at such an epic philanthropic effort?

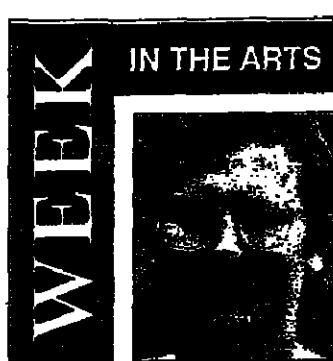
Well, where shall we start? It's true that the Getty has inspired much gee-whizz journalism. But many critics have also questioned its look, location, purpose and extravagance. "Obscenely grandiose," declared the showbiz trade paper *Variety*. That's rich, coming from a journal that reports almost daily on Hollywood movies costing £100 million or more — but it was a typical reaction.

Some American papers found this mountain-top fortress "overbearing": too aloof and inaccessible — physically and spiritually — from troubled Los Angeles and its

cultural needs. It should have been in a gritty downtown location, said the *Los Angeles Times*. Other critics simply declared the whole notion of plunking a great temple of art into a metropolis dedicated to the production and consumption of low-brow showbiz to be absurd. "How will all this high culture affect the lifeguards on *Baywatch*?" quipped *The New York Times*.

That paper even managed to be snide about the tram that carries visitors up the hillside to the museum. "How shocking it is to be riding in Los Angeles in a vehicle that almost resembles public transportation," it chortled.

Of course, much of this resentment stems not from the new building, but from the Getty Trust's activities over 15 years. With £3 billion of the oil mogul's legacy in its kitty, it has been a hugely destabilising player in the



RICHARD MORRISON

snapped up by the marauding giant brandishing the universe's biggest chequebook — the resentment grows.

Now this gleaming new citadel appears like a taunt. "We've snaffled all the best art," it seems to declare, "and we have locked it into this impregnable stronghold, and although you can come and drool at it, you are never going to get it back again."

It doesn't really help, either, when the Getty trustees hint that, since the new museum is already full, they won't be buying so prodigiously in the future, but instead funding massive art-educational programmes. The damage has already been done. One of the most fascinating art books of recent years — Carol Duncan's *Civilising Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* — argues that private patronage, although ostensibly about enhancing public ap-

preciation of the arts, often has the opposite effect: the ordinary visitor feels like a voyeur, allowed one peep inside a world of wealth and privilege that will never be his. One can imagine that a visit to the Getty could inspire this sort of negative reaction.

What's more, the Getty opens just a few weeks after the astounding new Guggenheim in Bilbao. Private art collections seem to be making all the waves at a time when public museums are struggling just to tread water. Well, good luck to them: at least someone has money to lavish on art. But when you read one American writer crowing that the new Getty "makes the Louvre look Third-World", you do feel slightly queasy. The line between justifiable pride and Uncle Sam cultural imperialism is very thin. The main reason why the new

Getty seems shocking, though, is that its castle-like grandeur, high above common humanity, seems literally to place art on a pedestal. This is nothing short of a cathedral, in which Old Masters are not to be enjoyed or studied, but venerated in high-Victorian style. Today, the trend is decidedly towards making art as accessible and "user friendly" as possible. The new Getty seems to turn the clock back a century.

But perhaps that is exactly what high culture needs, if it is to make an impact in a place like Los Angeles. "This is an edifice with which Hollywood can identify," declares Peter Burt, the veteran movie-industry commentator. Well, if that's true, uncork the bubbly! That which inspires, excites, frightens or angers Hollywood today becomes the global mass-entertainment of tomorrow. If the new Getty can get Tinseltown enthused about high art, who knows what uplifting effects it may have on cinema and television screens across five continents?

## Dark view of an avaricious little world

It is not exactly the Venice of the brochures. Night fog or sea-mist wells up through the stage boards and half-shrouds the wet black brick that looms above, as if setting the scene for a guest appearance by Jack the Ripper. Merchants and ladies of the night, wearing costumes that suggest both the Renaissance and a garish 17th century, mill around what weirdly appear to be wardrobes or coffins covered with funeral drapes.

These eventually turn out to conceal nothing more deathly than stuffed peacocks, a Chinese vase, and the rest of the bric-a-brac Portia keeps in her house. But the point is made. Robert Jones has designed a Venice where you are unlikely to find either Christian callousness or Jewish vindictiveness rendered sympathetic: a Venice where young men casually spit on the venerable Tubal's white beard, and Shylock is so far gone in hatred that, even after Portia has bettered him in court, he seriously considers plunging his knife into Antonio's chest.

Shylock is Philip Voss, who recently made a terrific impact in the RSC's *Twelfth Night* with a grim, loveless Malvolio. Here he has still greater weight, along with a surprising variety. He moans and wittily teases Julian Curry's Antonio, an uptight chap who lastidiously wipes his fingers after they have been shaken by his (Shylock's) hands. But even before he loses Jessica — here, glimpsed by him as she disappears into a mob of revellers provocatively sporting pigs' heads — Voss never lets you overlook something fell and implacable behind his hooded eyes and creased jowls.

For a moment he cuts a pathetic figure, standing in his tattered gaberdine and, with scratches on his face that he may or may not have made himself, rasping out sobs from deep in his stomach. But he

### THEATRE

**The Merchant of Venice**  
RST, Stratford

makes an unusual and interesting recovery. Not until the second time that he delivers the warning to Antonio, "let him look to his bond", does he realise what this might mean, and not until the third time does a plan begin to form in his mind. And so to a fierce, hoarse scene in the Doge's court that leaves a prostrate Shylock scrambling helplessly about in the gold coins Bassanio has offered him, a victim of Christian avarice and his own fury.

This performance is so strong that it overshadows the rest of Gregory Doran's pro-

duction, though this is never less than decent and, indeed, refreshing in its refusal to tilt the human evidence in any spurious, un-Shakespearean direction. Helen Schlesinger's Portia is warm and generous, not least when she puts the case for mercy.

Scott Hardy's Bassanio is an affable young man, without the cynicism or the secret homosexual life some productions attribute to him, and, if John Dougall's Gratiano comes across as a boor and anti-Semitic loudmouth — well, look at what he says in the text, and you will see the justification. But shouldn't Curry put on weight? You could as easily get a nice steak from one of Pharaoh's lean kine as cut a pound from this scrawny puritan Antonio.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

## Sentenced to hard labour

THE misadventures of Mr Aeneas Posket, hitherto a blameless servant of the law, become fitfully funny in this lumpy production up from Chichester, but many stretches of it are dead on the stage. The playing of the women is especially trying: all are awful some of the time and some are awful most of the time.

Nor has Nicholas Broadhurst's direction properly thought out the transfer to the Savoy stage. For instance, the anguished admission of culpability eventually torn from Ian Richardson's Posket is accompanied by his slide down the shelves of a bookcase, yet the extent of this is impossible to see through the clutter of furniture.

Dwarfing the human characters in the Posket drawing-room is a great marble statue of the man bearing his name on the plinth above the words *Magistrate Philanthropist*.

**The Magistrate**  
Savoy

Such grandiloquence is so contrary to the way this correct, considerate, dutiful man actually regards himself that it brings Broadhurst's understanding of Pinero's farce into serious question.

The ultimate cause of Posket's ordeal is his new wife's decision to subtract five years from her age. Cis, her son by a previous marriage, therefore supposes himself to be a boy of 14 when all his sparkish instincts are those of a young man pushing vigorously at 20.

It is Cis who takes his stepfather to the dubious hotel and helps him to run off when the police raid the premises. Dishevelled and scarcely able to control his shaking limbs, Posket arrives

at his court next morning only to discover that his wife was also at the hotel and is in the dock in front of him.

John Padden's marvelously gawky Cis enlivens the play. The two halves of his body pull him in different directions, as impulse and restraint fight a battle inside him. Even his voice is gawky.

Richardson's chiselled profile is a perfect image of Victorian rectitude but his performance, though enjoyable and physically brisk, does not convince as an actor for farce. A comic actor, yes, adding extra syllables to simple words like *paid-in* that make them both funny and truthful. But his interpretation lacks that crucial sense that a little part of Posket is excited by the prospect of a night out and that being naughty might be fun.

JEREMY KINGSTON



The Duke of Venice (Sandy Macnab) looks on as Philip Voss's superb Shylock prepares to extract his pound of flesh from Antonio (Julian Curry)



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# Now you see him, now you won't

He's sold 13 million records, but he walks down the street unnoticed.

Alan Jackson meets Robert Miles

Just when you have become convinced that the world is full of people desperate for their 15 minutes of fame, you meet someone like Robert Miles and all seems sane and ordered again. Not that there are many people like him in the pop world. Anyone else who had sold 4.5 million copies of a debut single (1996's ubiquitous dance instrumental, *Children*) would have made sure that their biographical details, not to mention their facial features, were inscribed upon the collective consciousness as firmly and indelibly as a tattoo. But not this 29-year-old Italian. At around the time we meet, in a Notting Hill café, his silhouette is making its debut on *Top of the Pops*. "I just don't feel comfortable with this pop star identity, this concentration on image," he shudders. "The music is enough. I let it represent me."

You must imagine that you hear these words spoken in an Italian accent so thick that you could spread it on your ciabatta. Meanwhile, that his name is so resoundingly Anglo-sounding is a further deliberate evasion: Miles was born Roberto Concina and spent his early years in Switzerland, where his parents hoped to make a better living as immigrant workers. When he was ten, they returned home to the industrial suburbs of Venice — a city forever associated in British minds with water-lapped heritage, Visconti and *Don't Look Now*, but which presented a different face to the young music fan newly returned to it. "Just as

southern Italy is a national centre for house, so the Venetian area is a centre for the underground techno scene," he explains. "When I started DJ-ing at the age of 14, it was natural for it to be that which I played."

His operational (and, perhaps, aspirational) moniker in the clubs and on radio was Roberto Milano. Years later, when launching his production and recording career, he opted for a further change, retaining only the first three letters of that assumed surname, and adding an e and an s to form "the more international-sounding," Miles. And he moved to London, "for no other reason than it's the best place in the world to be if you want to lay yourself open to all kinds of new music: drum and bass, trip-hop, big beat, whatever. People here are very open-minded, which is why you can find bands like the Prodigy or Chemical Brothers in the charts. If I weren't based here, I would at least have to visit very frequently."

The particular skill Miles demonstrated not just with *Children* (recently judged the most frequently broadcast track on American TV and radio in 1996) but also with its parent album *Dreamland* was that of being able to lace such relatively cutting-edge stylings with a more conventional and accessible musicality. For this, he has been written off as a Jean-Michel Jarre of the dance scene by some purists, doubtless green-eyed at the fact that his combined singles-and-album sales now stand at 13 million worldwide. Miles is un-



Robert Miles, the million-selling artist hereafter known as silhouette: "Perhaps I'm in the wrong business, but I'm very much anti-fame"

abashed: "I think it's wonderful that people twice my age liked *Children* enough to buy it. And that I have proved dance music doesn't have to be linked to a lifestyle or to chemicals."

He also proved with it that a small budget and low-tech equipment are no barriers to success. "*Children* cost me about £150 to make. I spent

what little money I had in the bank on setting up a small studio — just one sample, one keyboard and one small desk — and mixed it on those machines. I don't think you necessarily have to spend a lot of money to get a good result. The basic idea behind it all is the important thing."

*Dreamland's* successor *23AM* (a time once announced

by Miles's malfunctioning ansaphone) is newly-released by the label Deconstruction, and sounds rather more expensive. "It was made in the same studio, but I've got some more machines now," he smiles shyly. "You have to stay up to date if you want to be on a par with other producers — every day there's a new machine with a new sound. The

album represents a step forward, but I think it still sounds like me."

He is right. Yes, there are vocal contributions from unknown French singer Nancy Danino and America's Kathy Sledge, former leader of the family group Sister Sledge. And yes, guitars, brass and strings provide additional coloration, but at its heart is the ambient house/slow-trance instrumental dance sound that is Miles's musical trademark.

Not all critics have been convinced by the evolution: "As Enya well knows, there is a massive market for Radox-

style musical reflection," remarked Q magazine of the project's New Age tendencies. But they would have to agree that, once again, Miles has been clever enough to play the pop game his way, making sure that, while we all recognise his musical sound, he can still walk down any street unrecognised.

"I tried a few times to be the proper star with *Children* but, to be honest, I just didn't feel comfortable being on *Top of the Pops* with a camera pointing at me," he shrugs. "That's why we've come up with the idea of using my silhouette on the CD sleeve and projected onto a screen among other visuals for television promotion: it's me, but not too much of me. Perhaps I'm in the wrong business, but I'm very much anti-fame. I don't respect my fans; I reply personally to each letter I receive and enjoy the interaction. But in watching friends who have been successful, I've seen how

6 It's wonderful that people twice my age liked *Children*

fame can take you to a different dimension. I prefer to stay feet-on-the-ground, with a normal flat, normal clothes, riding the Tube instead of driving some big car. To my mind Robert Miles doesn't exist as a pop star. He's just a composer, DJ and producer."

In his native Italy, birthplace of the paparazzi, such an attitude is seen as inexplicable. He grimaces: "They want you to parade your success and your wealth, invite all the magazines into your home, lay yourself open to kidnapping. Because I won't do that, they make up stupid things — that I snub Madonna, who actually I like very much, or that I am wooing Björk with roses every day, or that I have had an enormous swimming pool built in my flat. None of it is true. You British think your tabloid press is bad, but..."

Miles has stopped talking to ask for the bill which — again, a pop star rarity — he insists on paying. Outside on the crowded streets, he attracts no more attention than might any other tall, fashionably dressed, slightly exotic-looking young man. It's what is called, in some circles, a result.

## Ennui for the money

UNLIKE most of the acts who are big enough to play Wembley, Sheryl Crow brought with her no lavish stage sets, no fancy costume changes, no gimmicks and no theatrics. She is a performer who believes that the music is the message — all she needs to do, to paraphrase the hook of her best-known song, is to have some fun.

And we did. Crow was in potent voice and she led a musicianly show by example, playing three different guitars within the first 15 minutes, switching to keyboard, blowing some harmonica and then finally strapping on an accordion. The band, which she introduced somewhat unimaginatively as "the Spice Boys", was in blistering form. Jeff Trott played some out-

### LIVE GIG

Sheryl Crow  
Wembley Arena

standing slide guitar, particularly on *Home*, the rhythm section of Tim Smith and Jim Burgess kicked with venom and Todd Wolf's second guitar also rocked powerfully.

The best songs, such as *Leaving Las Vegas*, *Everyday* is a *Winding Road*, *A Change Would Do You Good* and *Run Baby Run* were given muscular workouts and you realised just how many classic radio-friendly hits Crow has already penned in a career that is still only two albums old.

It was only when she sang her anthem, *All I Wanna Do*, that the odd doubt crept in. Given a harder edge than the recorded version, the song strangely lacked charm and one began to wonder whether Crow was having quite as much fun as we were.

Her communication with the audience was minimal and her patter was perfunctory. We had the usual "I love London" platitudes and then, for no reason in particular, she told us she felt "like getting into trouble". In truth it was all far too controlled for there ever to be much chance of that. Two weeks ago, Crow spoke of her loneliness and her desire to experiment with something different, "more committed, more aggressive". It was hard to fault her Wembley performance for its professionalism, yet the feeling that she is growing restless with the current show was inescapable.

The sense of ennui (hers, not ours) was only really banished when she donned the accordion during the encore for *Strong Enough* and a sprightly version of the old Who song, *Squeeze Box*.

She returned once more for the melodramatic theme song she wrote for the new Bond movie, *Tomorrow Never Dies*, transformed from rock chick into sophisticated vamp by throwing a long coat with a huge fur collar over her regulation leather pants. At last she looked as if she really was having some fun.

NIGEL  
WILLIAMSON

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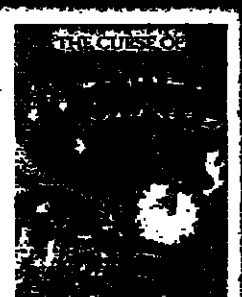
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### BLUES ALBUMS

## Such a shame

One of the classic scenes of the film *Baby Doll* Wallach chasing a scantily-clad Carroll Baker while New Orleans blues shouter Smiley Lewis belts out the song *Shame, Shame, Shame* on the soundtrack. The track, with its irresistible *Shame* on you, *Miss Roxie* chorus is the opening number on a double CD set called *Stompers* (EMI 59336 2), which successfully mixes classic Forties and Fifties tracks such as *Let The Good Times Roll* by Shirley and Lee and *Safronia B* by Calvin Boze with more contemporary rockers by Dr Feelgood and Canned Heat.

A star whose career flourished in those early postwar years before his death in a car crash in 1951 is pianist and vocalist Cecil Gant. His sponymous album (Flyright FLY-CD01) reveals that the so-called "GJ Sing-Sation" could switch from being a blues crooner on his big hit *I Wonder*, to being a prototype rock'n'roller on numbers such

as *Killer Diller Boogie*. A decade later, everyone was trying to emulate the sounds coming from the Motown studios. When trends changed, the tracks were quietly shelved, only to be rediscovered by British fans eager for these highly danceable numbers. The fact that the biggest demand came from clubs in places like Wigan and Bolton led to the music being dubbed Northern Soul — a fair chunk of which can be heard on *Rare, Collectable and Soulful Vol 2* (Kent CDKEND156). Lorraine Chandler, Willie Kendrick and Sharon Scott provide some of the gems from the RCA vaults.

Quality soul can also be found, perhaps surprisingly, on a CD devoted to Little Eva, the singer best known for her 1962 hit *The Locomotion*. *LLL-Little Eva* (Westside WESM-512) includes *The Trouble With Boys*, *Takin' Back What I Said* and the very politically-incorrect *Please Hurt Me*.

JOHN CLARKE

### TOP TEN ALBUMS

- |        |                          |                        |
|--------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 (2)  | Let's Talk About Love    | Celine Dion (Epic)     |
| 2 (1)  | Spiceworld               | Spice Girls (Virgin)   |
| 3 (3)  | Urban Hymns              | Verve (Poly)           |
| 4 (4)  | Best of ...              | Wham! (Epic)           |
| 5 (5)  | Backstreet's Back        | Backstreet Boys (Jive) |
| 6 (6)  | Greatest Hits            | Eternal (EMI)          |
| 7 (11) | White on Blonde          | Texas (Mercury)        |
| 8 (8)  | Paint the Sky with Stars | Enya (WEA)             |
| 9 (7)  | All Saints               | All Saints (London)    |
| 10 (9) | Like You Do              | Lightning Seeds (Epic) |

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Figure in brackets denotes last week's position

### JAZZ ALBUMS

## Exotically tasty

RABIH ABU-KHALIL *Odd Times* (Enja ENJ-9330 2) THE Lebanon-born Rabih Abou-Khalil, master of the oud, a stringed, lute-like instrument, now lives in Munich, and this album (his ninth for Enja) features his working band — harmonica player Howard Levy, serpent/tuba player Michel Godard, drummer Mark Nauseef and frame drum player Nabil Khalaf — recorded live in Cologne.

There is clearly great novelty value in the extraordinary textures and timbres resulting from the combination, in particular, of oud and harmonica (the latter itself drawing on many apparently disparate traditions, chiefly blues and country music), but surprise at this soon gives way to admiration for the band's infectious enthusiasm for straightforward blowing.

Whether they are scurrying through Abou-Khalil's bustling up-tempo themes or wringing every drop of emotion from his achingly slow lament, they manage to make the quintet's unique instrumentation sound entirely natural, and the standard of the soloing — even on the seldom-heard serpent and the neglected tuba — is first-class.

BILLY BANG *Bang On!* (Justin Time JUST 105-2) VIOLINIST Billy Bang really needs to be seen live for the visceral impact of his music to

have its full effect, but this studio album, also featuring pianist D.D. Jackson, drummer Ronnie Burrage and bassist Akira Ando, is the next best thing.

The rapport between Bang and Jackson, both no-holds-barred soloists as interested in textural variety and harmonic adventurousness as in straightforward swing, is the album's most immediately arresting strength, and they strike sparks off each other on the vigorous Bang originals that make up the bulk of the album. On the odd ballad, too, and on the occasional standard — both *Sweet Georgia Brown* and *Yesterday's* receive feisty airings — Bang maintains a full head of steam, confirming his reputation as his instrument's most individual current practitioner in jazz.

CHRIS PARKER

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# The biggest Christmas on record

It's not that I'm stupid, heaven forfend — I once improvised a much needed turret-shaped cake tin by using a dogfood can. Admittedly the whole family had food poisoning for a week afterwards, but it looked incredibly impressive on the day. Ample proof, I think, that I'm not short on brain-skill. Even so, it really hadn't occurred to me until last week that music critics' end-of-year Best Of round-up palavers weren't merely hacks showing off their great taste or plugging great showbiz mates, but are supposed to be a guide to which albums people should buy for Christmas presents.

Bearing this in mind, I've decided to approach my Best Of thingy from a scientific slant. I mean, the Radiohead album wouldn't make a suitable under-tree garnish for the Head of Personnel or Uncle Sebas-

ian. So, using the high-tech wizardry of half an hour on his hands and some whisky, I will be matching the albums of 1997 to their ideal recipients.

First, there's that foppish teenager who rather fancies himself as the next Oscar Wilde, and doesn't see the difference between an elegant smoking jacket and a towelling robe that makes him look like a member of staff at a leisure centre. He'd love *A Short Album About Love* by The Divine Comedy (Setanta), an epic orchestral swoon.

The divorcing couple, who hiss at each other like two snakes knotted together in a washing basket, will find solace in *Homogenic* (One Little Indian) by Björk (for her — it's all about how men are truculent weasels) and *Dig Your Own Hole* (Heavenly) by the Chemical Brothers (for him — he'll doubtlessly be

**Caitlin Moran picks her albums of the year to give to family, friends and, not to put too fine a point on it, enemies for all time**

trying to impress some young teenage girl with how hip he is, and will need a crash course in the Big Beat mardi gras).

Jolly uncles called Ned or Steve are always difficult: does one go for the hunky and golfball kit, or the tankard with "Beer is Here" written on it? There is a third route: *In It for the Money* by Supergrass (Parlophone). It's so full of brio that Uncle Steve will be going bell for leather on his rowing machine while he listens to it, and crammed with guitar licks he can play along to on a tennis racket. Hopefully he will be so delighted that he'll completely forget to tell you about his mechanic mate Chris who bled

his brakes for a fiver, diamond bloke, used to play darts professionally "on the circuit"...

**M**rs Uncle Steve — who can ever remember her name? Certainly not Uncle Steve, who refers to her as "it" — would be quietly thrilled with *Songs from Northern Britain* by Teenage Fanclub (Creation) because, with their winsome Scottish harmonies and sturdy oak-beam loveliness, they will remind her of the first fella she ever fell in love with, and planned to marry, until Uncle Steve bought her that Tia Maria and it all went to pot.

Grandma? Well, for the grandmother who was a bit of a goer in her day, *Curtains* by the Tindersticks (Island) evokes that drunk-on-red-wine, faded-velvet-dresses-and-demob-suits era with which she'll no doubt be very familiar. Do warn her in advance, however, that there's a big swear word on track three. She may want to sing along with it. For the prim grandma, the pre-Raphaelite pastoral strummings of the *Sundays* (Static and Silence) (Parlophone) would be ideal — the tempo never goes above knitting-speed.

That lovey-dovey couple who spend every weekend blocking the aisles in Ikea because they are

holding hands over a pine colander and kissing? For them we have *Andromeda Heights* by Prefab Sprout (Sony) — a Sondheimian paean to the beauty of life, the inevitability of death and the wonder of the night sky. Do bear in mind that they will probably conceive to it, however, and you will be godmother to a grumpy child called Andromeda.

Workmates are always tricky. You hate them: if you had your way they'd be getting an envelope full of mould. But since June they have been filled with smugness about the gift they have got you. So give the "wacky" bloke with the horrible ties *Ladies and Gentlemen, We are now Floating in Space* by Spiritualized (Dedicated), a collection of druggy symphonies of unspeakable glory. He'll hate it. Goal!

And get the office cow *Death to*

*the Pixies* by the Pixies (4AD). As it's a collection of some of the filthiest, most abrasive surf-rock ever recorded, she'll be horrified. Goal two! And the boss? *Blur* by Blur (Parlophone). He liked *Parklife*, with its chirpy geezer cockney pop and singalong choruses, but he won't be singing along to the garage thrash of *Chinese Bombs*. Oh no. He'll be worried that "he doesn't get it", that he's too old, and he'll be penning his resignation by the new year. Hat-trick!

Secure in the knowledge that you have once and for all proven that your colleagues have the musical taste of dead sponges, you can feel free to treat yourself to *OK Computer* by Radiohead (Parlophone), which just is the best album of the year. Because Christmas, at the end of the day, is all about you.



It's two for the show from Roni Size, the award-winning in-your-face-face of drum and bass, while Supergrass (right) churn out the sort of guitar-led rock that makes you feel good about being alive at the end of the millennium

**David Sinclair, meanwhile, sees salvation in the clatter of drum and bass**

I remember being struck by the genius of Roni Size's album *Newforms* (Talkin' Loud/Mercury) while travelling on a train. I had heard it before, but its ultra-hip mixture of jazzy vocals and drum and bass grooves hadn't really clicked.

However, accompanied by the pneumatic vibration of the carriage and a view of the English countryside racing past the window, the frantic momentum of numbers such as *Railing*, *Morse Code*, *Destination* and the awesome *Brown Paper Bag* seemed to assume a deep karmic significance that has stayed with me ever since.

At that point, Size and his group Reprazent were still unknown outside the world of hardcore drum and bass, and the album had next to no chance of being a hit. Eight

## Crossing the bridge of Size to tomorrow

weeks later *Newforms* had won the Mercury Music Prize and Size was being hailed as the new messiah of drum and bass.

Whether or not you subscribe to the idea of drum and bass as the "new jazz", it is by far the most exciting development in British popular music since the house/rave revolution of the 1980s and may well have an equally profound effect on how we listen to

music in future. My other favourites from this supple and free-ranging genre are the propulsive *Big Load* by Squarespinner (Warp), the cinematic *Colours* by Adam F (Positiva/EMI) and the sophisticated self-titled album by DPhive (V2/Virgin).

The deluded way in which the supposed demise of the Spice Girls has been reported by a media determined to cut them down to size has failed to

take account of one inconvenient detail. Their "flop" album, *Spiceworld* (Virgin), which can't seem to make up its mind whether to be No 1 or No 2 in the charts, is actually crammed with top tunes. I hear it most days, thanks to my daughter and her friends, and I applaud its sheer vivacity and positive message. But mainly I just like the tunes.

For very different reasons, I continue to adore Radiohead's *OK Computer* (Parlophone), another sublime collection of songs that offer a window on the twisted, misanthropic world view of singer Thom Yorke. An honourable mention in the rock-groups-with-integrity-led-by-singers-with-a-chip-on-their-shoulder category must also go to The Verve, who have at last managed to pull off a similar trick with their impressive third album, *Urban Hymns* (Hut).

**T**his has been an extraordinary year for British music. Although overall sales are static, the ten best-selling albums of 1997 in the UK, so far, are all by British acts. So perhaps it is fitting that my only non-British favourite should be a rank outsider, namely *Intervention* (Warp) by the Finnish composer and producer, Jimi Tenor. A tremendous musician, classically trained on saxophone, piano and flute, yet steeped in the grimy, lo-fi production values of street-level club culture, Tenor marries gorgeous jazz-funk melodies to lounge-core-techno grooves to produce music of wondrous ingenuity and exuberance.

It was also a vintage year for rock traditionalists. Bob Dylan made an unexpected return to form with *Time Out of Mind* (Columbia), Reef swaggered to No 1 with *Glow* (Sony S), Mike Scott rediscovered electric rock'n'roll with the poetic *Still Burning* (Chrysalis) and Paul Weller came up with a handful of spine-tingling songs on his under-rated *Heavy Soul* (Gut Discs/Island).

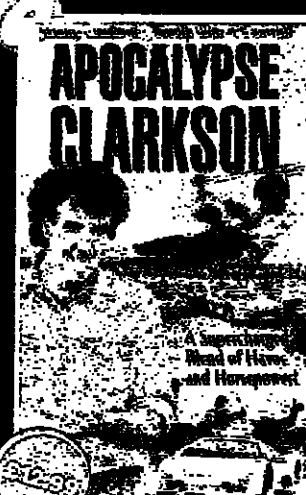
But my money still goes on the Rolling Stones for *Bridges to Babylon* (Virgin), an album that rocks twice as hard as any of the above (except Reef), exuding a delinquent energy — particularly in Mick Jagger's vocal performances — that time has emphatically failed to erode. There will never be another group to touch them.

## Follow the star this Christmas.

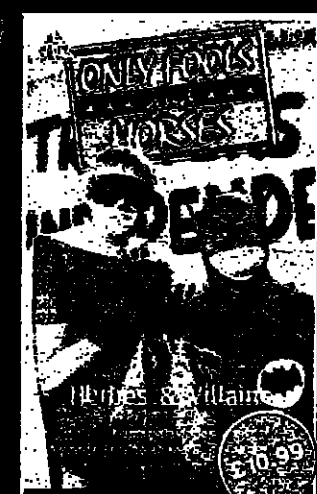
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# When interests of child are not paramount Police should give reasons before forcible entry

**Regina v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Gangadeen and Another**  
Same v Same, Ex parte Khan  
Before Lord Justice Hirst, Lord Justice Swinton Thomas and Sir Brian Neill  
[Judgment November 27]

Where the Home Secretary was considering the deportation or removal from the United Kingdom of an illegal entrant with a child having right of abode, he was not bound rigidly to follow his own policy guidance provided he gave reasons for departing from it.

The practice of allowing such persons to remain in the United Kingdom was an extra-statutory concession and the court would be slow to interfere with a decision not to grant it.

In approaching the problem as a balancing exercise, in which the weight to be given to the considerations on each side of the balance was to be assessed according to the individual circumstances of the case, the Home Secretary was not out of line with the relevant decisions of the European Court of Human Rights, which did not support the notion that the interests of the child were paramount under article 8 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms 1953 (Cmd 8949).

The Court of Appeal so held dismissing two appeals: (i) by Mrs Philomena Gangadeen and her son Daniel Jurawan, aged seven, against the decision by Mr Justice Harrison on November 15, 1996 of their application for judicial review of a decision by the Home Secretary on August 31, 1995 refusing to grant her leave to remain and to proceed with her

removal to India; (ii) by Mr Khalid Khan against the decision by Mr Justice Turner on October 8, 1996 of his application for judicial review of a deportation order made against him by the Home Secretary on January 31, 1996.

Article 8 of the European Convention provides: "1. Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence."

"2. There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others."

Mr Patrick Duffy, QC and Mr Ramby de Mello for Mr Khan; Mr Nicholas Blake, QC and Mr Asoka Dias for Mrs Gangadeen and her son; Mr Steven Kovacs for Home Secretary in Khan's case; Mr David Pannick, QC and Mr Mark Shaw for the Home Secretary in Gangadeen's case.

LORD JUSTICE HIRST said the cases had been listed together because each raised an important question of general principle, namely whether in a case where a decision by the Home Secretary to remove a person from the United Kingdom affected the interests of the child of the prospective deportee, preference had to be given to the best interests of the child as the paramount consideration.

Mrs Gangadeen, an Indian citizen, had entered the UK in 1983 on six months leave and had been declared an illegal entrant in 1993. Her son's father was at all material

times married to another woman. Daniel had lived in the UK all his life, resided with his mother and her husband, a British citizen, had attended school since 1993 and retained a close relationship with his father and other paternal relations.

Mr Khan, a Pakistani citizen, had married a British citizen in Pakistan in 1989 and their daughter Saira had been born in the UK in May 1990. Mr Khan had arrived in England in 1993 with 12 months leave to enter as the husband of a British citizen, but the couple had separated in 1993 and were living apart.

His Lordship referred to the Home Office deportation policy guidance *Marriage and Children* (DP/2/93), said to take account of article 8 of the Convention.

It was common ground that the Home Secretary was in ordinary circumstances obliged to act in accordance with his declared policy, which provided that where a marriage or relationship with a person settled in the UK had lasted more than two years, deportation or illegal entry action should be a general rule not to be initiated or pursued.

The policy also provided that the crucial question where a person to be removed or deported had custody of a child with right of abode in the UK was whether it was reasonable for the child to accompany the parent to live abroad, if he departed from the policy it was incumbent on the Home Secretary to explain why.

It was also common ground that he must balance the interests of the child against considerations of immigration policy and control. But the two sides parted company over the scope of the Home Secretary's discretion in applying the policy, as to the status in

English law of the European Convention and its impact on the construction of the policy and as to the degree of primacy if any which must be accorded to the interests of the child in the balancing exercise.

Mr Blake and Mr Duffy had submitted that the paramount consideration, and that article 8 as interpreted by the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights should directly inform the Home Secretary as to the proper mode of application of his policy, which should be treated as a formal instruction to immigration officers and Home Office officials.

Mr Pannick had submitted that the policy was no more than guidance, concerned with an extra-statutory concession whereby people were allowed to remain who would otherwise be subject to removal. The court should not intervene provided the Home Secretary had regard to the policy and made a reasonable decision.

It was not open to the applicants to rely on the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights since the Convention was not part of English law. In any event article 8 required no more than a fair balance between competing considerations, with no special preference for family life or the interests of the child.

His Lordship reviewed the authorities on the scope of the Home Secretary's discretion under the policy. In his judgment the essential purpose of the policy was to provide guidance, so that it would be wrong to treat it as a rigid instruction. The court should be very slow to interfere with the Home Secretary's decision not to grant what was essentially a concession on extra-statutory grounds.

It was right for the court to

confer a broad measure of discretion on the Home Secretary in relation to the application of the policy, so long as he had regard to it and made a decision which was not inherently irrational. The greater the interference with human rights the more the court would require by way of justification.

Although the UK's international obligation to abide by the Convention was not enforceable in the domestic courts, the courts would not ignore it nor entirely exclude reference to the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights which would be given great weight in cases where the facts were similar.

*Berehovi v The Netherlands* (1988) 11 EHRR 322, *Abdulaziz v UK* (1985) 7 EHRR 471 and *Poku v UK* (1996) 22 EHRR CD 94 quite clearly demonstrated that, in their interpretation of article 8 in the context of deportations or removals involving children, the Human Rights Court and the Commission approached the problem as a straightforward balancing exercise, in which the scales started even, and where the weight to be given to the considerations on each side of the balance was to be assessed according to the individual circumstances of the case.

In his Lordship's view the judge was entitled to derive support from Code B, on the searching of premises by police officers, of *Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984* (s.66) *Codes of Practice* by way of analogy, when determining whether the use of force was necessary, the code did not apply to the present situation. The judge's ruling was correct.

LORD JUSTICE THORPE gave a dissenting judgment. He said that it was recognised that the requirement to give reasons at common law when arresting without warrant was not absolute: *Christie v Leachinsky* and *Brazil v Chief Constable of Surrey* (1983) 1 WLR 1135, 1163 but might be qualified according to the circumstances.

In the case of questioning by the police as contrasted with arrest, the principle that there was no legal duty on a citizen to assist the police was absolute: *Rice v Connolly* (1966) 2 QB 414, 419 and

At the trial of his claim, the judge ruled there was insufficient evidence to go to the jury that any officer told him they wished to enter the house to arrest his wife. There was no appeal against that ruling.

The judge found that, notwithstanding the plaintiff's and his wife's irrational and abusive behaviour, circumstances had not arisen for the officers to force entry without announcing their intention, and he directed the jury to determine the question of damages as the claim had succeeded.

His Lordship said that, at common law, the police's power to arrest without warrant had been replaced by statutory powers, such as section 17 of the 1984 Act. At common law, reasons were required to be given for the arrest to the lawfully *Christie v Leachinsky* (1947) AC 573.

As was said in *Swales v Cox* (1981) QB 849, 853, an officer had a severe burden to discharge when trying to justify that entry of premises by force was necessary. It would be wrong to read *Swales* as saying that the simple refusal of a request by the officer to be allowed entry of himself rendered the use of force necessary.

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## Awarding costs after statutory nuisance

**Hollis v Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council**  
Probert v Same  
Before Lord Justice Schiemann and Mr Justice Moses  
[Judgment November 25]

It was mandatory for the court to award costs to individuals bringing proceedings for statutory nuisance and such costs should include costs incurred in establishing that a statutory nuisance existed.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held in a reserved judgment, inter alia, allowing two appeals by case stated by Margaret Hollis and David Paul Probert against decisions of Dudley Magistrates Court to disallow all the costs incurred by them in bringing proceedings against Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council in respect of statutory nuisances made pursuant to section 82 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Section 82 of the 1990 Act provides: "(1) Where on the hearing of proceedings for an order under subsection (2) above it is proved that the alleged nuisance existed at the date of the making of the complaint, then ... the court shall order the defendant to pay to the person bringing the proceedings such amount as the court considers reasonable sufficient to compensate him for any expenses properly incurred by him in the proceedings."

Mr Timothy Straker, QC and Mr Michael Singarayer, QC, appellants; Mr Duncan Matheson, QC and Mr James Findlay for the council.

MR JUSTICE MOSES, delivering the judgment of the court, said it was clear that the words "shall order" in section 82(1) of the 1990 Act conferred an obligation upon the court to pay

the costs incurred by the appellant. Mr Matheson submitted that the words "properly incurred" in the proceedings "empowered courts to disallow not merely excessive costs but also all costs where proceedings need not have been brought at all."

The words "expenses" incurred in the proceedings included compensation to expenses incurred in the preparation for the hearing and at the hearing.

He pointed out that a complaint could be made one day after the minimum period of notice had elapsed, at a time when work had started to abate the nuisance and possibly before it had finished. Moreover, a person who deliberately obstructed works to abate a nuisance could have a right to costs.

His Lordship said that those submissions failed to give sufficient weight to the statutory scheme proposed by Parliament. Parliament having afforded an opportunity for an aggrieved person to bring proceedings for statutory nuisance as soon as a brief notice period had expired could not be supposed to have allowed at the same time for that advantage to be removed at the discretion of justices on the ground that the opportunity should not have been seized by the complainant.

It was clear that if the statutory nuisance was abated before proceedings were instituted the complainant could recover none of his expenses.

On a proper reading of section 82(1) the costs recoverable by a complainant would include costs incurred in establishing that a nuisance existed prior to bringing proceedings.

The words "properly incurred" in section 82(1) meant no more costs than were necessary and permitted the court to disallow expenses which it considered need not have been incurred.

Solicitors: Gefens, Walsall; Mr John Polychronakis, Dudley.

## Prisoner's right to know gist of reports to review body

**Regina v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte McAvoy**  
Before Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Hobbhouse and Lord Justice Mummery  
[Judgment December 3]

A prisoner whose security status was under review had a right to the gist of reports to the review body so that he could make representations as to his categorisation knowing the case he had to meet.

Fairness did not require full disclosure of all the material supplied to the review body or disclosure of the names of those who had provided the information. The Court of Appeal so held, dismissing an appeal from Michael John McAvoy from the refusal of Mr Justice Forbes on March 21, 1997 to grant judicial review of the decision that the appellant should remain a category A prisoner, or to grant a declaration that the appellant was entitled, subject to public interest immunity, to full disclosure of all reports to be placed before the category A committee.

In December 1984 the appellant was convicted of armed robbery of gold bullion and diamonds valued at £26 million from the Brink's Mat security depot and sentenced to 25 years imprisonment. He was initially categorised as category A and remained in category A.

In November 1995 he was provided with the gist of reports to be disclosed to the category A committee on his annual security review.

Assisted by the Prisoners Advice Service he made representations, seeking to be downgraded to category B but the committee maintained his category A classification. He applied unsuccessfully for judicial review. He appealed.

Mr Edward Fitzgerald, QC and Miss Philippa Kaufmann for the appellant; Mr Kenneth Parker, QC and Ms Dinah Rose for the Home Secretary.

THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS said the appellant was convicted of an extremely serious offence. The gist statement for the review drew attention to the importance of the appellant's offence, a report by prison staff, a number of incidents at the prison and factors both favourable and unfavourable to him.

The representations made were impressive. From the gist statement, the Prisoners Advice Service had been able to make meaningful and useful representations on the appellant's behalf. The written statement of the committee's decision indicated that the nature of the appellant's offence was central to their decision.

The annual review was normally conducted by a category A review team. The appellant's case did not conform to the normal criteria for reference to the committee but exceptionally he was referred because of his representations. That illustrated that the annual review procedure was flexible.

The appellant submitted that he sustained injustice by the approach adopted in making information available to prisoners. He relied on *R v Parole Board, Ex parte Wilson* (1992) 1 QB 740, *R v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Doody* (1994) 2 AC 531, *R v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Duggan* (1994) 3 All ER 271 and *R v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Cremer & Scholley* (unreported, October 21, 1992).

It was now the practice, on considering parole, to make available to prisoners in the appellant's position the material on which the Parole Board had acted. The appellant submitted that if it could be done in parole, it could be done for the categorisation process. If it could be done, it should be done.

In considering whether the procedure adopted was fair, practical considerations had to apply in

the proper running of a prison. Category A prisoners were among the most dangerous within the system. There could be considerable difficulty in managing those prisoners.

In *Doody* the House of Lords had endorsed the approach of providing the gist of material relied on rather than the material itself. That procedure, at present adopted by prison authorities on the review of categorisation, was perfectly satisfactory and perfectly fair.

Most importantly, where it was appropriate, those responsible for the review were prepared to reconsider in the circumstances of any particular case whether additional material should be made available. That provided sufficient safeguards.

Lord Justice Hobbhouse and Lord Justice Mummery agreed.

Solicitors: Mr Simon Creighton; Treasury Solicitor.

## Appeals discouraged

**Hinduja v Asian TV Ltd**  
Appeals under Order 82, rule 3A of the Rules of the Supreme Court should be discouraged. The purpose of the rule was to provide a speedy decision in chambers as to whether or not words complained of in an action for defamation were capable of bearing the meaning contended for.

The Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Hirst, Lord Justice Henry and Mr Justice Harman) so ordered on November 25 dismissing

an appeal by Shrichand P. Hinduja and Gopichand P. Hinduja against a decision of Mr Justice May on October 1, 1996 holding that words complained of in their action for libel were capable of bearing a meaning sought to be justified by the defendant, Asia TV Ltd.

LORD JUSTICE HIRST said Order 82, rule 3 was intended to lay down a swift procedure to eliminate meanings which the words were incapable of bearing.

Solicitors: Barlow Lyde & Gilbert; Hughmans.

## Severing objectionable part of instrument

**Barclays Bank plc v Caplan and Another**  
Before Mr Jonathan Sumption, QC  
[Judgment November 26]

It was occasionally possible for the court to sever from an instrument affected by undue influence the objectionable parts, leaving the rest uncontaminated by undue influence.

Mr Jonathan Sumption, QC, sitting as a deputy High Court judge, so held in a reserved judgment in the Chancery Division on an action by Barclays Bank plc for possession of a property belonging to Michael Isaac Caplan and Pauline Vivienne Caplan.

There were three party proceedings against Ronald Nathan & Co, the solicitors who advised Mrs Caplan, based on the allegation that if she was bound by the charge, they had failed to advise her appropriately.

Mr Iain Hughes, QC and Mr Simon Monty for the bank; Mr Michael Lyndon-Stanford, QC and Miss Elspeth Talbot-Rice for Mrs Caplan; Mr Francis Bacon for the third party.

HIS LORDSHIP said that the bank's charge over the home owned jointly by Mr and Mrs Caplan to secure Mr Caplan's business debts was binding on Mr Caplan. But Mrs Caplan resisted possession on the ground that her signing the charge was procured by her husband's undue influence of which the bank had constructive notice.

The charge, which was originally limited to guarantee a loan of £300,000 to one company, was first executed on September 18, 1986. His Lordship found that although the wife's signature had been procured by Mr Caplan's undue influence, applying *Barclays Bank plc v O'Brien*

(1994) 1 AC 180, 196G-197B, the bank had taken adequate steps to ensure that she had had independent legal advice as to the nature of the transaction and was therefore not fixed with constructive notice of the wife's right to have the transaction set aside.

However, on November 20, 1987 Mr and Mrs Caplan executed a side letter which extended the charge to cover guarantees of the husband's debts of an unlimited amount and in respect of three additional companies. His Lordship found that the bank had failed to ensure that Mrs Caplan had received appropriate independent legal advice before she signed that document.

The bank was therefore not entitled to enforce the charge against Mrs Caplan as to the additional three guarantees for an unlimited amount.

The question was whether its failure to take reasonable steps to ensure that she had freely consented to the increase of the burden meant that the side letter was unenforceable even as to the original burden.

At common law, where an instrument contained legally objectionable features which were unenforceable against one party, they might be severed from the rest of the instrument if (i) the unenforceable feature was capable of being removed by the excision of words, without the necessity of adding to or modifying the wording of what remained, and (ii) its removal did not alter the character of the instrument or the balance of rights and obligations contained in it.

*Chemidus Wavin Ltd v Societe pour la Transformation et l'Exploitation des Resines Industrielles SA* (1992) 3 CMLR 518; *ATEL Ltd v Hughes* (1992) Total Oil (Great Britain) Ltd (1985) 1 WLR 113 and *Sadler v Imperial Life Assurance Co of Canada Ltd* (1988) 1 RLR 388, 392.

In a rational system of jurisprudence, one would not expect the corresponding principles of equity to differ. In such cases, what was the enforceability not of pieces of paper but of covenants and dispositions in pieces of paper which might contain more than one covenant.

It was, moreover, worth pointing out that the common law principles had been developed mainly in the context of disputes about the enforceability of covenants in restraint of trade, a field in which the object of the law was broadly similar to that of equity in setting aside dispositions procured by undue influence, namely to protect people perceived to be vulnerable from the consequences of certain kinds of improvident bargain.

In many cases the result of severing part of an instrument in that way would not be markedly different from that which followed from exercising the undoubted power of a court of equity to set aside on terms as to the restitution of benefits received under the transaction impugned, or to uphold the transaction but restrain the one party by injunction from enforcing it in particular respects.

To say that there could never be severance of an instrument affected by undue influence would be a remarkable triumph of form over substance.

It was fair to say that cases which called for the severance of parts of instruments affected by undue influence were likely to be rare, for the simple reason that a finding of undue influence or misrepresentation vitiated effective consent.

If the principle of severance was applied to the side letter, the result would be that the bank's charge would be enforceable as to the original burden, but not as to the additional three guarantees for an unlimited amount.

There was no reason why Mrs Caplan's consent should not be regarded as having been freely given to one of them, about which she had apparently been properly advised, but not to the others, about which she had not.

If Mrs Caplan had signed four side letters on November 20, 1987, one for each guarantee, there would have been no difficulty in regarding them as separate transactions. What she actually did was no different in any substantial respect.

The third party proceedings were dismissed.

But the ordinary legal principles governing the severance of bargains was perfectly capable of accommodating that problem.

His Lordship referred to *Allied Irish Bank plc v Byrne* (Mr Justice Ferris, February 2, 1994, unreported) and *TSB Bank plc v Camfield* (1995) 1 WLR 430, two cases in which the court took an all or nothing approach since to do otherwise would have effectively been to rewrite the contract.

However, neither of these cases was authority for the proposition that setting aside was invariably an all or nothing process even in a case where the objectionable features of the document could readily be severed from the rest without rewriting it.

In his Lordship's judgment the side letter of November 20, 1987 remained effective as to the first guarantee of September 18, 1986, notwithstanding that it could not stand as regarded the other guarantees.

The references to the three latter guarantees were severable. They were not interdependent, either substantially or linguistically.

There was no reason why Mrs Caplan's consent should not be regarded as having been freely given to one of them, about which she had apparently been properly advised, but not to the others, about which she had not.

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Solicitors: *Barclays Bank plc v Caplan and Another* (1997) 1 WLR 113 and *Sadler v Imperial Life Assurance Co of Canada Ltd* (1988) 1 RLR 388, 392.

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Report shows that co

## Top mai

Children aged between five and 11 are as much potatoes, according to a primary school survey, as they are primary school pupils.

It emerged that four fifths of the 150 children interviewed by the Welsh Sports Council for the *Time for Sport* survey published last month, were either avid about sport, three quarters had competitive skills, and many belonged to sports clubs outside school hours. Only one per cent said that they did not like sport and 8 per cent said that they did not like competitive games.

"These findings are encouraging," says Huw Jones, director of policy planning for the Welsh Sports Council, says, "The children are - even if you are creating opportunities for us, we will create it down."

Delivering such opportunities is not always easy. For as the report shows, there are increasing problems with the provision of primary school PE. In some schools, PE means that teachers - particularly women - can take a break from teaching the subject.

"We are using the Government to increase the time allocated to PE in schools," says Jones. "Some teachers received as little as 10 hours during their entire career. That is worrying, not only because it means that knowledge is impaired. Many of our best are on sabbaticals."

"Safety is an important issue in PE, unlike classroom-based subjects such as English or history. So we want to ensure that primary teachers are properly trained to teach PE. Information is key."

Further provision is also demanded to improve the skills of existing teachers. Parents and the media are also being encouraged to give the profile of sport in the home. The survey also found that parents' interest in sport increased as they encouraged their children to participate. The survey encouraged them to enjoy their own sport that their parents - particularly fathers - supported.

Television was also mentioned as a

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## EDUCATION

## The two types of teacher

Tony Mooney  
reports on  
research into the  
personalities  
found in the  
classroom

With last week's official figures confirming that 21,300 teachers quit their jobs in the first nine months of this year, there is every indication that England's education system is heading for a staffing crisis.

This bad news is compounded by figures released by the Graduate Teacher Training Registry, which show that there is a 10 per cent fall in the number of people applying for teacher-training courses. This fall may in part be due to the £1,000 tuition fee levy from next September. However, it is more likely to be a result of the negative publicity that teachers and schools have received over the past decade.

Given this background, there is every reason to hope that the Government's £1.5 million advertising campaign to persuade people to choose teaching as a career will quickly bear fruit.

However, there is a suspicion that asking famous people to talk about their favourite teacher under the headline "No one forgets a good teacher" is strong on razzmatazz but weak on indicating what personal characteristics might make someone suitable for teaching. There is no personal identifier that makes a member of the audience sit up and say "that could be me".

Are there any particular character types that the recruitment campaign could have highlighted? Do teachers have particular traits that attract them to the classroom?

According to the research from America, teachers appear to belong to two main personality types which are related to the arrangement of the children they opt to teach. The results of the work tend to reinforce the long-held prejudice that the better minds tend to migrate towards secondary education where they will be more intellectually challenged.

The research was carried out by Susan Sears and John Kennedy, of the Ohio State University Department of Educational Services, and was reported in *The Journal of Educational Research*. The work identified the personality types of 886 students who obtained teaching degrees at the university in the Eighties. The personality profiles of the would-be teachers were obtained after the students



had completed a standard Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) report. The underlying psychology of the MBTI owes much to Carl Jung's belief that "random variation in human beings is actually quite orderly and consistent, being due to certain basic differences in the way people prefer to use perception and judgment". The report consisted of 188 forced-choice questions that were computer analysed, and was based on four dichotomous personality dimensions. The four opposites involved were: extroversion (E) vs introversion (I); intuition (N) vs sensing (S); thinking (T) vs feeling (F); perception (P) vs judging (J).

Two distinct personality types emerged. The sensing, feeling and judging (SFJ) ones became primary school teachers and the intuition, thinking and judging (NTJ) types migrated towards secondary teaching.

The primary teachers who showed sensing character traits fully exercise their five senses. They tend to perceive their surroundings in terms of what they can see, hear, taste and smell. These individuals show an interest in what is real and factual and will emphasise fact over theory and reality over imagination. Other predominant characteristics are empathy and feeling towards others. They are

The better  
minds migrate  
towards  
secondary  
education

concrete in their approach to tasks, thrive on order and like to make schedules that they will carefully follow.

Such people bring many strengths to the primary classroom. Their need for order allows them to make sense out of the many demands of teachers' time, which helps them to cope with having to teach a number of different subjects. Their interest in meeting the needs of others helps them to accept the diverse personalities and problems of today's children. Despite their many attributes the primary school teachers with an SFJ profile are not likely to be the successful leaders of their profession.

These teachers, say the authors, "will not be leaders in the educational reform that many believe is needed to improve today's schools. They respect order, the concrete, and the status quo. They are unlikely to be comfortable with the disorder, ambiguity and confusion that inevitably accompanies change".

Secondary school teachers are somewhat different. They tend to fit an NTJ profile. They are likely to approach their work in a more theoretical way and are much more disposed to investigate relationships and possibilities through insight or intuition. They are drawn to complexity, innovation and change. Of secondary teachers, with NTJ profiles, the authors say: "Their intuitive and thinking nature, which inspires them to seek solutions to complex problems, intimates that they possess greater potential to advance educational innovation and reform. In short, NTJs appear to be the best source of leadership among practising teachers for efforts to reform education."

Both primary and secondary teachers show a judging (J) type of personality. They are interested in long-range planning and prefer to have things decided and settled. This is probably why so many have become disgruntled with the continuous change in our education system in recent years. Judging types are often

## Why it took me 60 years to graduate

Octogenarian graduate Hilda Whiting finds that students are the same whether they are 18 or 81

Are you amazed to learn that there is a scarcity of octogenarian graduates? There must be, or I would not have been regally treated at my recent graduation.

My degree was delayed because of the Depression, when everything had to be paid for but there was no money, so I set off for France to learn French. If England was poor, France was desperate but I got tuition in exchange for work. War broke out and I returned to join the Women's Royal Naval Service, which occupied the next six years.

Then, various careers and responsibilities kept the degree on indefinite hold. Eventually, illness and bereavement made a new purpose imperative and Digby Stuart College, part of Roehampton Institute in Surrey, accepted me as a mature humanities student. Mature students have disadvantages. Mine was being allocated a pigeonhole at ground level. When I bent down, my glasses fell off and I couldn't see the number. Another was finding the right room. The module system scatters students so most only know where they are bound for and it was never the same destination as mine.

However, I found my way around and even survived registration; this is efficiently run but taxing and only ends with the issue of library ticket and student card. Students wear jeans and look bright; I never achieved this. I don't wear jeans but I do have my own brand of scruff, as a student's work is second only to a miner's in dirt. It comes from paper and books, giving that distinctive education aroma.

Other smells were evoked by history modules, such as no drains, pashed, clothes, beer, bread and the sweaty,

frantic search for the cause of the Black Death. Could it be earthquakes or clergy gadding about?

We students rejoiced, too, when essays and dissertations were finally handed in. I was often asked how I got on with other students. We were all students together, even the tutors, and I loved them all.

Maturity meant that I was never a threat. In private, I accused my tutor, a lovely man, of subverting the young. In reprisal, he set me to work on 19th-century prostitution.

This gets a bad press and I set out to refute it. It was really not too difficult once you realise that all the sources were biased.

Once registered, motivation continues, helped in my case by urging my middle-aged children not to worry about me, as I was fed, warm and occupied. I got tired, like

all the students, and probably the tutors, too.

The tutors on the whole, were fun and field trips a treat. The only physical strain was all that sitting. In the second year I learnt to swim and that solved the problem. The Slow Lane Club also provided an education, while catching its breath. Topics discussed included medieval law, archaeology, Odes of Horace, music and, of course, the temperature of the water.

The temperature at my college was warm and welcoming, so if your gap years run on, don't be daunted. Just choose your favourite subject and register, remembering to ask for a pigeon-hole high up if you wear glasses. I am now, at the age of 81, enjoying another gap year, which may go on for some time, while I choose a subject from the many tempting ones on offer.



Hilda Whiting: maturity meant she was never a threat

Report shows that competitive physical exercise is in demand by pupils

## Top marks for school sport

Children aged between five and 11 are no couch potatoes, according to the largest survey made of primary pupils' sporting activities.

It emerged that four fifths of the 3,500 children interviewed by the Welsh Sports Council for *Prime Time For Sport*, to be published later this month, were enthusiastic about sport, three quarters liked competitive sport and many belonged to sports clubs outside school hours. Only 2 per cent said that they did not like sport, and 8 per cent stated that they did not like competitive games.

"These findings are encouraging," Dr Huw Jones, director of policy planning for the Welsh Sports Council, says. "The children are saying 'if you create sporting opportunities for us, we will come in droves'."

Delivering such opportunities is not always easy. For, as the report shows, there are continuing problems with the provision of primary school PE. Inadequate training means that teachers — particularly women — can lack confidence in teaching the subject.

"We are urging the Government to increase the time allocated to PE in initial teacher-training courses," Dr Jones says. "Some teachers received as little as eight hours during their entire course. That is worrying, not only because insufficient knowledge is imparted. Mainly, our fears are on safety grounds."

"Safety is an important issue in PE, unlike classroom-based subjects such as English or history. So we want to make sure that primary teachers are adequately trained to teach PE informatively and safely."

Further provision is also demanded to improve the skills of existing teachers. Parents and the media are challenged by the report to raise the profile of sport. The pupils questioned stated that their parents' interest in sport increased their willingness to participate. The overall sportiness of the family environment encouraged them to enjoy those sports that their parents — particularly their fathers — supported.

Television was also regarded as a



Girls' sports, such as netball, are neglected in favour of boys' activities

means of strengthening their sporting interests by highlighting role models. But a distinct gender gap opened as pupils noted their favourite sports stars. In a list headed by Ryan Giggs and Eric Cantona, none of the top ten were women. Only 1 per cent of the children and just 2 per cent of girls mentioned the leading sports woman, Sally Gunnell.

This finding is the result of the media's preoccupation with male sports such as football and rugby, the Sports Council believes. "The media must give a higher priority to women's sports," Dr Jones says. "That way schools will also raise their profile. You often hear teachers praising the efforts of their school's rugby or football teams. But the hockey and netball teams are way down the list."

The survey's results will be used by the

Welsh Sports Council to develop its millennium strategy for encouraging PE in schools. It is considering directing some of its National Lottery funding towards teacher training. But its lottery budget is being cut from £15 million to £12 million next year. That means voluntary clubs will suffer as priority is given to schools.

That is a concern for the Sports Council because its objective is to maintain primary pupils' interest in sport into the secondary schools and then, through clubs and community projects, into adult life. It is well on the way to achieving that challenge, however, as 58 per cent of the children questioned stated that they already belong to sports clubs.

IOLA SMITH

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# 'Chris is the best presenter in Britain. He has the chance to build a major company'

Richard Branson has thrown in his radio lot with the maverick Chris Evans. Why? Interview by Raymond Snoddy

Until now, at least, Richard Branson's failure to circumnavigate the world in a hot-air balloon has been more than matched by the need to establish himself as a serious media player even though he has wanted to do both things almost as much.

This week there was more obvious success with the media than the ballooning as the ever-smiling tycoon with the genius for personal marketing, often at the risk of his own neck, spurned the "respectable" gentlemen of Capital Radio and took the "courageous" decision to throw in his lot with Chris Evans, the unpredictable presenter.

"Basically, the maverick side of me went for this option," Branson explained from Marrakesh a few minutes before he had the painful experience of watching the balloon making a maverick flight of its own.

"It was partly the fact that all our staff were very keen on this as an option. Our management were very keen on this. The public who listen to Virgin Radio were very keen. And I found it more exciting."

It was almost certainly the sense of excitement that got him in the end. After all, he never did care much for the constricting, disciplined world of the quoted company, either his own, or that of Capital.

"When I held the phone and heard the staff cheering and screaming with joy I was absolutely certain I had made the right decision," says the man who has made a considerable success of Virgin Atlantic but not quite yet managed to make all his trains run on time in his Virgin rail franchises.

The reasons for throwing his radio interests in with Chris Evans and his Ginger Productions are clear and personal, even though the Ginger option is probably worth closer to \$83 million than Capital's \$90 million, much of it in shares.

"I like Chris a lot. He's the best radio presenter there is in Britain. He's bright, he's quick and he has the chance to build a major company here," says Branson.

The reasons given to Capital executives, who believed the deal was still going through, subject to the approval of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission and say-so of Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, were very different.

The hand-delivered letter cited delays and doubts caused by the MMC inquiry, which, in fact, has by now been completed, and suggested that perhaps there was

a danger that the Government would turn the deal down.

On any level the story of how Richard Branson chose to merge his main media interests with Chris Evans — and how Evans, the talented, though quirky, radio and television presenter became a media proprietor — is a remarkable one.

Earlier this year Evans was disillusioned with radio after his abrupt departure from Radio 1 and the row over working on Fridays.

He told friends he was not going to do the radio any more. It was a holiday in Ireland that changed his mind. His interest in the personal power of radio — talking as if one-to-one with an audience — was re-awakened by listening to Gerry Ryan, the Radio Ireland broadcaster.

Evans came back and told his long-time agent, Michael Foster, who will now become chief executive of the television interests of the Ginger Media Group, the new enlarged company, that he wanted to get into radio again — but as a shareholder as well as a presenter. His first stop was Talk Radio UK, the national commercial speech station. There was no early answer, so Evans moved on to the only other possible national station, Virgin — Classic FM was rightly not seen as an option.

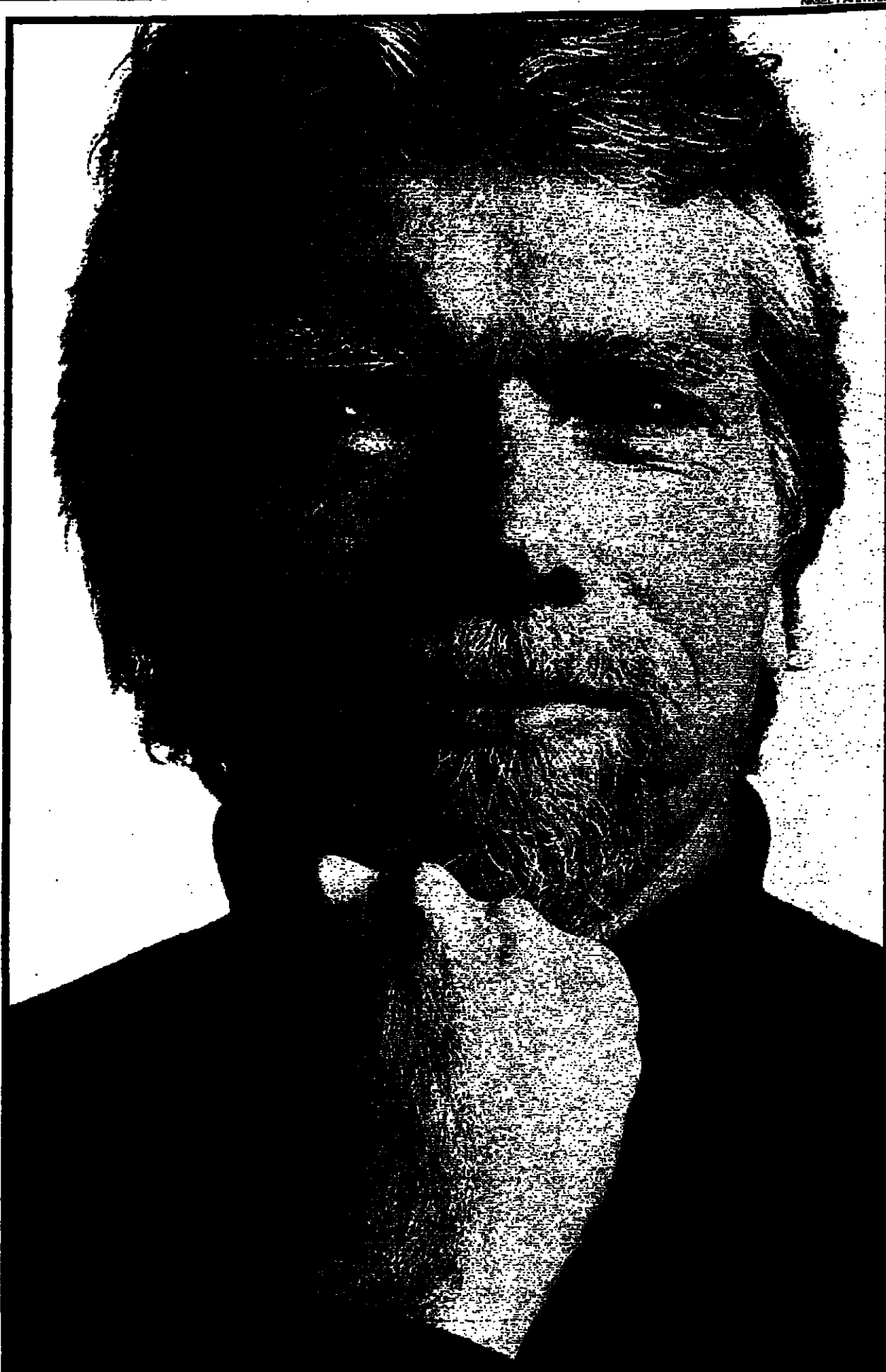
When Evans decided that he wanted to approach Branson to take over Virgin, Foster took over the mechanics of the deal. He called Simon Olszang, the media lawyer, and a venture capitalist he had met by chance at a dinner party, Barbara Manfrey of Apex Partners. Branson's first response was a firm "No".

The critical moment came in October when Evans, armed with a single sheet of paper containing the headlines of the deal, telephoned Branson on his Caribbean island of Necker and charmed him into saying a definite maybe.

"Richard Branson took a gamble. He could have played safe but the maverick in him got quite excited," says Foster.

It is commonplace to say that Evans and Branson are mavericks in the sense that both are instinctively drawn to trying to overturn conventional wisdom, conventional structures. But there is also another similarity, important in business terms. They both know how to harness publicity for their own ends.

Years ago Branson was happy to confess that, although he obviously enjoyed the thrill of setting records, when he crossed the Atlantic by speedboat, publicity for Virgin Atlantic on the US networks was also in his mind. Foster insists that



"Our staff were keen, the listeners were keen, and I found it exciting," says Richard Branson of his deal with Chris Evans

Evans is more disciplined than he appears and that some of the escapades, such as the drinking session with Paul Gascoigne, are partly to generate notoriety, while at the same time provide amusing anecdotes for his many shows. "It's all considered. Everything is done for a purpose and to get the best margins," he says.

Certainly Branson feels very content with the outcome, which will give him 20 per cent of the enlarged Ginger Media Group to Evans's 50 per cent — 55 per cent when the founder's share of management shares are included. "We will be well protected. We will have two directors on the board and apart from our stake in the company, we will now be involved in TV production, too," he says.

For years Virgin has been trying to get into television, and each time it has failed to get past the regulators in the shape of the Independent Television Commission — first the 1991 bids for three ITV franchises, and more recently the failure to win the Channel 5 licence.

"One of the problems we have had in the past is that we were in the middle of the airline battles when we were doing the television licence applications. I also think

— and this may be paranoia — that the ITC has seen us as a maverick and never felt very comfortable about us," he adds.

Branson now has high hopes for the future of Ginger, although he cautions against too high expectations at first.

"It can obviously develop in television," he says. "It can develop in radio, and possibly it can go further than that. The group has a fair amount of debt so it should not be too overly ambitious in the short term."

Branson believes that Virgin Radio should concentrate on attracting more listeners and advertising before, in time, going for more radio licences and television properties.

But the biggest development of all, and part of the reason why Richard Branson was looking for a deal with anyone — Ginger or Capital — was the move into digital radio. As an existing broadcaster Virgin will automatically get digital frequencies next year.

"Virgin and Ginger are committed to being part of the digital revolution and will be investing the amount of money that is necessary to push us forward in

that direction," says Branson, who adds that a Virgin brand of digital radio, to help to kick-start the market, is a possibility.

The Radio Authority will, under complicated government rules, advertise digital frequencies in March, with Ginger guaranteed frequencies to run a national station of near-CD quality sound. Up to 80 per cent of the programming can be the same as the conventional service. There is also a big long-term opportunity that Ginger will be able to compete for a second national digital licence, although it would have to pass the Authority's "diversity" test.

In striking the deal with Evans, the Virgin founder may also have found the template for simplifying other parts of his sprawling empire — particularly if there is not enough money to develop everything.

With Virgin Radio, Branson explains that the deal is virtually a management buyout rather than selling outside.

The UK's best-known entrepreneur and balloonist says: "If we ever do things like this with Virgin companies, I think as much as we can do on a management staff buyout, the better."

## Keen to fall into the Net

A new survey finds that technology is firing the public's imagination

The British really, really want to be able to take advantage of technology, according to the final results from what is probably the largest British survey on the future of communications, to be published on Monday (see column, page 44).

No fewer than 323,727 people took the time to fill in detailed questionnaires on what people expected from communications technology in a survey carried out by Cable & Wireless Communications (CWC), the largest cable company.

More than 50 per cent said they intended to get an Internet connection at some time in the future and 22 per cent said they already had one at home.

Some 86 per cent would like to be able to select films from their own television set rather than having to go out to a video shop — a facility already available on a limited basis from satellite and one that will be provided on digital cable and satellite from next year, while 78 per cent said they would like their own on-screen television guide to select their favourite programmes.

"One of the things that came across very strongly in the survey is the level of interest people have in technology and their willingness to think about new applications," says Helen Burt, acting director of marketing at CWC.

The survey was designed to help CWC to decide which areas to focus on, and already it has had an effect. One of the things to come through in the early responses was how keen people were to know what a long-distance telephone call was likely to cost before making it. The finding encouraged the CWC to push ahead with the launch of a 5p maximum charge for weekend calls anywhere in the UK at weekends.

"It has been very attractive, and people have been taking up the service. The concept of capped calls is something we need to explore further," says Ms Burt.

Some 56 per cent of respondents would like a telephone with different ringing tones to identify who the call is for, while 44 per cent would be interested in a video phone at home.

Nearly half of the respondents, particularly young families and singles, would like to shop from home, and 62 per cent would like to browse through, and order from, bookshops from their living rooms.

More than 75 per cent of the respondents said they would like to have online libraries to obtain instant answers to educational and general interest questions, while 73 per cent would like to be able to see live pictures of their homes and holiday destinations before they book a break.

Ms Burt believes her challenge will be to package communications services to consumers in simple and relevant ways, and the television set seems to be the key to that. Many people say that is the way they would like to gain access to the Internet.

A woman whose mother is deaf had another novel suggestion. "Wouldn't it be great if, when a telephone call came in, you could have the conversation through the TV set?" This is just one of many ideas that CWC says it will be looking into.

RAYMOND SNODDY

## Why without

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## Young Family man could be just what Albert Square needs

SEASONAL cheer for *EastEnders*. The cast's grotty dressing rooms at run-down Elstree Studios are to be renovated — though work will, naturally, stop short of the Albert Square set.

Also taking a close interest will be Malcolm Young, the personable new head of drama series, hand-picked by BBC1 controller Peter Salmon. Young joins next week after overseeing *Family Affairs*, Channel 5's soap. Young has decided to station himself at *EastEnders* for a spell, to integrate it more closely into his department. So what's the plot?

Less than 18 months ago, Young, as *Brookside*'s producer — responsible for that censored brother and sister incest scene — was comparatively unknown, overshadowed by his boss, Philip Redmond. Then he moved to London to lead Pearson Television's drama, which has taken over Grundy, producer of *Neighbours*, *Family Affairs*, the UK's only daily soap, is produced according to Grundy's Aussie clockwork methods: industrial precision and low cost.

Young, who is also overseeing *Casualty*, would thus be well qualified to introduce



Will renovated dressing rooms cheer up those *EastEnders*?

new efficiencies and drum up a fourth *EastEnders* episode to challenge *Coronation Street*, should BBC1's ratings drop. He also wants to spread out into other BBC dramas, like Granada's former soap writers Kay Mellor (*Band of Gold*) and *Brookside*'s Jimmy McGovern have.

Meanwhile, Richard Langridge, executive producer of children's programmes at the BBC, and the head of children's programmes, Lorraine Heggessey, are plotting a teenage soap to take on *Hollyoaks*. Only one problem: Mark Thompson, con-

troller of BBC2, hasn't the money to commission one.

WILL Chris Evans get to the church on time? Nicky Campbell, the ex-Radio 1 DJ now presenting Radio 5 Live's morning magazine, is getting married in London tomorrow to newsreader Tina Rinchie. Evans is guest of honour. Tina, who worked with Evans on his Radio 1 show, followed the ginger one to Virgin Radio when he took over the breakfast slot as a prelude to buttering up Richard Branson and buying the station (contrary to reports, the spurned Capital's board was

shaken to its roots by Monday's decision). Campbell, whose phone-ins are credited with raising morning ratings at Radio 5 Live by up to 30 per cent, is even tipped as a potential BBC TV newsreader. Not bad for a man who until recently also hosted ITV's *Wheel of Fortune*.

MORE on the BBC's review of why audiences are switching off its news. In classic tortoise style, it is to conduct two more months of debate about what kind of news programmes are needed. Martyn Lewis is certain that his brand of "good news" on *The Six O'Clock News* is in favour. But a shake-out of older presenters (watch out Peter Sissons, Michael Buerk) is on the cards. The problem is the under-35s, and whether instead of upheaval there should be a variety of BBC news programmes. It is possible BBC2 could start its own nightly news programme, and push back *Newsnight* to 11pm. My tip to serious Birtists: if you want to see what interests younger viewers, watch *Newsround* on BBC children's TV.

THE *Daily Mail* launched its latest offer to readers last



Saturday: "Win free ironing to the year 2000." Was it serious? Desmond Nichols, director of promotions for Associated Newspapers, says: "Yes. We sat down and asked what problems would our readers like taken out of their lives? Ironing's the least popular chore. And it is totally in step with Middle England."

It is also in step with the increased sophistication of readers' offers, the under-reported newspaper development of 1997. It began with *The Times*' Eurostar offer last year, which sent some 150,000 off to Paris, while the *Mail* began a half-price Skekley cleaning offer; half a million dirty items immediately crossed the counter, and it was extended to *The Standard* (all those readers slitting trapped in grubby tubes).

In the 1980s, people were much more aspirational. Now they like practical services. Our aim is to be part of the household, a reader's friend," says Nichols. Last Sunday, I stood in the Habitat queue bandishing my 20 per cent discount card offered by *The Times*. I was flanked by customers doing exactly the same thing. Those who (wrongly) predict the death of newspapers forget how hard they fight — on all fronts.



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CHRISTOPHER SMITH, the Culture, Media and Sports Secretary, has just appointed a panel of worthies to advise whether more sports events — such as the Ryder Cup and top rugby fixtures — should be saved for mainstream "free" television and added to the protected "list", keeping them off pay television. But Brian Downing, head of the marketing committee of the England and Wales Cricket board (ECB) whose home Test matches are listed, is furious over the panel's implicit bias which could leave a Test match with just one cheeseburger buyer, the BBC. "We are arguing that we must be de-listed," he said. The ECB is offering just one national event, the Test match at Lord's, for the new list. It foresees months of frenzied lobbying from sporting bodies in the months ahead. It's just not cricket and it's not just cricket.

## Animated Christmas

DANIEL GREAVES is the British Oscar-winning cartoonist behind the special BBC2 Christmas Eve event, *Flatworld*. Spikier and darker than Wallace & Gromit, there are no tactile clay models just flat, two-dimensional cardboard characters. Greaves is as gloomy as the Broadcasting Standards Commission about the spread of cartoons across children's television: his offering ends with the hero screwing up his remote control and getting on with his life.

Alas, his daughter Ella, 6, after living with *Flatworld*



Original work: *Flatworld*

(budget £750,000) for four years did not want to watch this. Indisputably original product. "She's my greatest fan," says Greaves.

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## Why news is bleak without young readers

Saturday: a lunch in Oxford with two final-year arts students. They are articulate and bright, work hard and enjoy music and novels. But they hardly ever watch television and buy newspapers only on an occasional Sunday as an "indulgence".

Sunday: another lunch with an 18-year-old on her "gap" year and aiming for medical school. She is only now starting to buy newspapers and says she has found one she enjoys. I lean forward in anticipation. "It's *The Independent*," she concedes that *The Times* is the best paper for news.

Monday: read *The Guardian*. Newspapers have become ugly, irrelevant, passive, dull and pompous, says American media expert Jon Katz, who writes for *HotWired*. They are being attacked by the deadly virus of Raging Old Fartism: "Filled with warring spokesmen, timorous warnings about pornography and other dangers, and disapproving barmumping about the decline of civilisation, papers have become the clucking old maids of the digital age."

They should throw out their news sections — they aren't in the breaking-news business any more — and make the first priority to get young readers back.

Tuesday: study the Audit Bureau of Circulation's report for November. Sales of national daily and Sunday tabloids last month were down by more than 300,000 on a year ago.

Wednesday: study the progress of the revamped *Independent*. On the front page almost twice as much space is devoted to Richard Branson and his balloon than to the Government's reform of the National Health Service (as in all four broadsheets). There is one other story (about surfball) and signals to five others, among them "Teletubbies misery", Sheryl Crow and "Hot clothes for cool kids".

Among the dominant items on inside pages are the Two Fat Ladies, Chris Evans, Agony Aunts and her daughter, and sex, booze and heroin addiction. Other pages are devoted totally to the Kyoto summit, health and the battle for jobs.

Thursday: study *Daily Mail*. The front page bills Fay Weldon — "Why we feminists risk destroying today's men", an article first published in *The Guardian*. One of its main features inside is headlined "An Oasis of vulgarity" and attacks the pop group's bad language.

As editors and marketers brood on how to stop declining newspaper sales and attract young readers, they are bombarded by such gobs of anecdote, research from focus groups, sales reports, studies of their rivals, and the gratuitous views of pundits who think they know better.

The difficulty is making sense of what the pundits say — which followed, which ignored? Yet the survival of some newspapers in the next century depends on making the right judgments now, as hundreds of millions of pounds are invested in them.

It was Mr Katz who provoked most interest among my colleagues this week. Throw out news sections? He has a point. Editors could not ignore the snatching of new-born baby Karl last Friday night. Even all the broadsheets led on the story. Yet she was safe by the time the papers were on sale. The "news" was out of date.

Only a very brave editor would decide to dispense with "news" on the front page of a "news" paper. That editor in 1997 has been

Andrew Marr of *The Independent*, who has opted deliberately to display one big picture and one or two main stories on his front

page. By concentrating on only a few stories and targeting a young audience, *The Independent* is pursuing the Katz agenda.

Against *The Independent*, the main candidate for the ROF award — disapproving barmumping, the decline of civilisation, warnings about pornography — has to be the *Daily Mail*. According to Katz, it must be doomed.

Yet what do the sales figures show for the past year? Sales of the *Daily Mail* are up by almost 150,000 but *The Independent* is down by 4,000. That does not mean that Marr's strategy is necessarily wrong: *The Independent* is under-funded and working from a position of weakness rather than strength. If he is given time, history is probably on Marr's side — and other broadsheet editors are proceeding more cautiously in the same direction and tilting — some would say dumbing down — the mix of news. But it does demonstrate that editing and marketing newspapers is more complex than Katz can comprehend.

As for my 18-year-old lunch companion, she has suddenly discovered that when she wants to know what's happening in medicine or the health service, newspapers are a mine of information. So how do we present newspapers so that she buys one every day?



Brian MacArthur  
EDITOR, THE INDEPENDENT

## Our man with Havanas

Yes, there is more to say about Woodrow Wyatt than has already been said in the obituaries, remembrances and appreciations that have been published since his death on Sunday. For the bow tie, the omnipresent cigar, the drawl and the chuckle concealed more than they revealed.

To understand Woodrow, one has to appreciate him as a journalist, something I came to do as I watched him craft his articles for the *News of the World* and *The Times* and learnt from the comments he so generously provided on my *Sunday Times* articles.

I always marvelled at Woodrow's ability to explain complicated issues in clear prose without in any way talking down to his audience. That skill, he once told me, came from studying Shakespeare, whose most memorable lines, said Woodrow, consisted of monosyllables: "To be or not to be..." "What's in a name? That which we call a rose..."

I shall always remember the Sunday morning when, having used my column for a discourse on energy policy, I turned to "The Voice of Reason" to find the same subject covered more fully and understandably in half as many words. I remember, too, Woodrow's constant efforts to make certain that he had his facts right. To be an economist and to be exposed to his charm and enthusiasm was to become his willing research assistant — gathering economic data, data on trends in crime and other social phenomena, data on developments in the US that might illuminate a policy debate in the UK.

And I shall never forget the tough integrity that underlay his journalism. Like other tabloids and most of the broadsheets — the popular and unpopular press, as they have been called — the *News of the World* was editorially opposed to privacy laws, seeing them as a restraint on freedom of the press and a tool to protect the privileged from the scrutiny to which a free society is entitled to subject them. Woodrow disagreed — and repeatedly said so in his column.

Enter a senior executive of the newspaper, acting — as far as I am aware — without consulting the proprietor. He asked me to set up a meeting with Woodrow. The three of us gathered for lunch at Woodrow's house in St John's Wood, scene of so many wonderful dinners and so much robust political conversation (it was Woodrow's custom to excuse the ladies after dinner so that we chaps could puff out — his — cigars, sip brandy and settle the affairs of the world; Baroness

Irwin Stelzer pays homage to Woodrow Wyatt, who offered friends wisdom and tolerance as well as fine wine and cigars



Woodrow Wyatt: he insisted that smoking improved health

Thatcher was an exception, having been declared "an honorary man" by Woodrow).

The executive laid out the case against a privacy law — in terms of its probably commercial impact on the tabloids, and implied corporate displeasure with Woodrow's position, which he suggested would henceforth

be edited out of the "Voice of Reason". I knew that this would be a lunch to remember: Woodrow had, after all, surrendered a promising political career to maintain a principle — that privatisation of the steel industry made no sense, Labour Party dogma notwithstanding. This when Tony Blair was still in rompers and new Labour was not even a gleam in anyone's eye.

Woodrow began by saying that by signing his column he took responsibility for its contents. He pointed out that the proprietor, who was opposed to privacy laws because of the protection they afforded malefactors, had never told him what to say in his columns, and never would. If the executive had any doubts about the proprietor's attitude towards Woodrow, he was invited to call Mr Murdoch to seek enlightenment. To the best of my knowledge, that call was never made.

Woodrow was often wrong. To the end of his days he insisted that cigarette smoking improved health. And, in my view, he was wrong on the question of privacy. But then, I am an American, accustomed to the protection that the First Amendment to our Constitution grants to the press. But, right or wrong, he stood by his principles, in the face of ridicule by his enemies, threats from those who thought they were in control of his financial circumstances and urgings by his friends to please, please, be reasonable.

The amazing thing is that his devotion to what he thought was right was not accompanied by the intolerance or meanness of spirit often found in those who think they know right from wrong. On many a Sunday morning my telephone would ring and a cheery "Woodrow here" preceded a gentle critique of something I had written in my column, a critique that was devoid of malice and invariably sound.

For Woodrow was as generous with his time and advice as he was with his claret and cigars (I still have some of the precious pre-Castro Havanas he shared with me). And he was recklessly so. The famous picture on the front page of this paper, showing Woodrow and Norman Lamont en route to the House of Commons for the Chancellor's attack on the Prime Minister, after John Major had sacked him, put Woodrow's reappearance as Tote chairman at risk. But the choice between a friend about to lose office and a still-powerful Prime Minister was an easy one for Woodrow, even if it meant losing a job he truly loved.

Journalism is immeasurably poorer without him, as are those of us who were fortunate enough to sit at his table — and at his feet.

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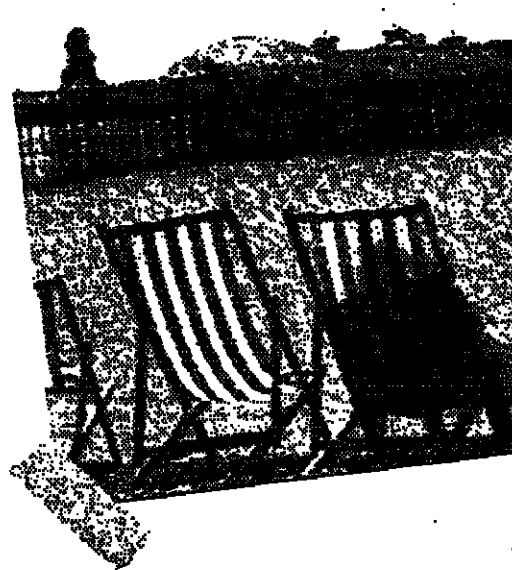
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## Pick and click on BBC's Online

John Birt, Director-General of the BBC, is nothing if not ambitious for the corporation's venture on to the Internet. He even predicted recently that the BBC would have the best Web site in Europe within 12 months.

On Monday, the man charged with realising Mr Birt's Internet ambitions, Edward Briffa, the former editor of *Tomorrow's World*, is due to launch his latest BBC.com offering.

The BBC Online news service has been in place since last month and PC users are already looking at 600,000 pages a day — a figure that rose to one million when the Louise Woodward verdict was announced.

On Monday, BBC Online launches its Ticker service — electronic ticker-tape information featuring the latest news scrolling continuously across the top of the computer screen. "Any time you see a BBC story you like you just click on it and there it is. When you have read it you go straight back to your piece of work," says Mr Briffa, who has to co-ordinate all the BBC's online activities — those on BBC.com that are paid for by licence fees and those on Beeb.com, a joint venture with ICL.

Next week will also see the launch of a BBC homepage and a channel which Mr Briffa describes as "fast food" — a digest of everything that is going on for those with a few minutes to spare.

The aim is to ensure that users will be supplied with individual, regular news items — such as the weather in a particular city, traffic conditions on a local road or a portfolio of stock prices.

As part of the licence-fee funded offering, there are also plans to develop, within the next few months, sites for everything from *Crimewatch* and *Gardeners' Question Time* to *Alive and Kicking*.



Briffa: online co-ordinator

Desert Island Discs and Pick of the Week.

The hope is that communities of interest can be created and that audience-to-audience communication, something that radio and TV do badly, will turn out to be one of the strengths of BBC Online.

"My ambition is to make the BBC home for the British [Internet] audience. It should be the site they go first and from where they explore the Internet if it is conducted," says Mr Briffa.

But why should the BBC, as a public service broadcaster, be involved in providing Internet services? Considerable sums of licence fee money is involved — up to 1 per cent of the licence fee, about £18 million a year.

There is also a strong feeling in the BBC that it must have a presence on the Internet if it is not going to lose touch with a new computer-literate generation, who, if not actually sceptical about the BBC's future role, might need persuading. Research shows that 20 per cent of the current BBC Online audience are students, 30 per cent are at work and 50 per cent at home. Beeb.com concentrates on entertainment titles such as *The Comedy Zone* and *RT Guide*. An electronic version of *Radio Times* it has now passed two million "page impressions" a month.

BBC Online hopes to provide specialist services for students — an electronic, minute-by-minute clearing house for university places or job opportunities are examples. It will also be possible, Mr Briffa adds, to create "a universe for children in which they are content to play".

In the summer there will be a public consultation to see what the Corporation is doing well and whether it is in the right territory or not. "It's on that basis that the BBC's commitment to Online will be decided," says Mr Briffa.

RAYMOND SNODDY

# Punch gets back into the ring

The magazine they thought would die is being talked about again. But how long before publisher Mohamed Al Fayed cuts his losses, asks Maggie Brown

This autumn something unexpected happened. The revived *Punch* magazine, which was supposed to be starting its second death rattle about now, began to get a bit better. Or at least, it is being talked about. And although one swallow does not a summer make, there is some evidence that Mr *Punch*, under the guiding hand of newish Editor James Steen, 32, has reinvented himself.

He's not a tasteful chap: he's gone back to bruising basics. And there is trouble, too, but the right sort of trouble, in the form of libel threats from the high and mighty, with Viscount Rothermere and lawyer Peter Carter-Ruck first in the queue.

"It's much sharper, Steen's surprised everyone," says Tim Satchell, founder of the monthly *Insider* magazine.

When Mohamed Al Fayed paid £500,000 for the defunct magazine title *Punch* nearly two years ago, the media industry was stunned.

He then proceeded to lose more than £7.2 million as his chosen middle-aged editorial executives — who were collected from the most expensive end of the newspaper business, but with no experience in moulding paid-for magazines — attempted an extravagant resurrection for September 1996.

Newsagents were flooded, freelance writers rejoiced at the extravagant fees, but the public was left stone cold by Editor Peter McKay's odd attempt to devise a cross between *The Spectator* and the old bumbly *Punch*. It was neither witty enough nor compelling. McKay swiftly switched back to his forte as a columnist.

"It was vanity publishing," says Steen — son of photographer David Steen and journalist Shirley Flack — dismissively. "Mohamed never wanted the old *Punch*. He wanted an investigative edge to it."

Stewart Steven, former Editor of *The Mail on Sunday* and the *Evening Standard*, stepped in, only to depart too. Then, last April, American writer Paul Spike steered it towards the current new identity. Mr *Punch* became a Lad. Out went the codgers. But

after six months and more crises Al Fayed and Spike fell out.

Steen, his deputy, who had moved to *Punch* from the salacious celebrity magazine *Here!* (tubed *Hello!* meets *The Sun*), enthusiastically seized the moment.

In what looked like a last desperate throw, *Punch*, by then selling only 15,000 copies instead of the lofty 150,000 or so originally talked about, switched down a gear and since September has been published fortnightly, on the alternate weeks to *Private Eye*.

Steen, with only a few months in which to turn it round, held a lengthy meeting with advertisers, who told him bluntly that the magazine was a "mushmash", and completely

unfocused. With his back to the wall — but thrilled with attaining the "utmost privilege anyone can have to become an editor, I'm obsessed with *Punch* 24 hours a day" — he decided to apply both the commercial lessons he had been tutored in at *Here!* and an earlier training as a Fleet Street gossip columnist on *Today* (a story told to him about Viscount Linley being allegedly thrown out of a London public house led to a £35,000 libel award).

"I've been forced... focus.

analyse what people buy, what makes them pick something up. It's celebrities, sex, gossip, things that they can't get elsewhere."

The magazine needed more "knocking" copy, he concluded. He began to target what he saw as the soft underbelly of *Private Eye* to who 25 to 45-year-old readers. (In recent issues he has published photographs, reprinted by *The Times*, of Ffion Jenkins, William Hague's fiancée, when she was a brunette, and won a high-profile legal victory over

the former Guinness chief, Ernest Saunders.) But thinking that *Private Eye* is a sitting duck is hardly an original observation. *Scalldug*, *The Digger* and now *The Insider* have all had a go over the past decade but have not got very far.

Yet in the past four years the *Eye*'s sales have been gently declining: the last audited figures were 179,000. Readers were bored with the old jokes: John Major's Diaries, and endless recitals of government sleaze — though in recent

months (unaudited) sales have recovered to 191,000 as new Labour's banana skins provide fresh themes.

Steen also decided that media stories shift copies, even though conventional newspaper wisdom says they don't. Where *Private Eye* has Street of Shame, his *Punch* has Reptile House. "Media stories have all the ingredients: conflict, glamour."

This led directly to the current undeniably controversial decision to rake over the tatty private life of the deceased Viscountess (Bubbles) Rothermere, who died five years ago.

Today sees part two of John McVicar's racy account of her taste for young men. "Pat liked a quickie", as told by ex-boyboy



Punch: fresh impetus

Ashley Roy. Steen jumped at the opportunity to publish, believing, rightly or wrongly, that Fleet Street had been unwilling to write about the wife of such a powerful media magnate.

This issue also parades, under the banner headline "Junk Mail", a letter from Viscount Rothermere's lawyers, protesting that the previous issue, with a mock-up of Lord Rothermere holding a copy of the *Daily Mail*, headlined "My Life with Bubbles", was a "complete forgery... a gross and extraordinary libel of our client".

This is old-fashioned *Eye* territory. No wonder copies of the offending article are quickly circulating around his empire at Northcliffe House, even while senior journalists say, with some merit, that it is a pointless, sad expose.

So are we witnessing a robust rebirth of bad-taste satire, investigation and crude muck-raking? Well, the small team of 20 clinging on at *Punch* certainly possess energy. But *Private Eye* has 37 years of tradition behind it.

Over all of this, presides Mohamed Al Fayed, the proprietor. He has employed Andrew Neil for one day a week to oversee his troublesome small media ventures. Some think that Al Fayed would love to cut his losses by selling *Punch* — if only there were takers.

Steen has a meeting once a week with Al Fayed: "My attitude is to put a smile on his face. He knows we're causing a stir."

But for how long?



James Steen: "The utmost privilege anyone can have is to become an editor. I'm obsessed with *Punch* 24 hours a day"

## The French say no to Budweiser

THE Government's dithering over tobacco sponsorship of sport was put into context this week by the decision of Anheuser-Busch, based in St Louis, Missouri, to give in to the French Government's ban on alcohol advertising.

The decision, which has attracted surprisingly little press coverage, has sent shock waves around international advertising trade bodies, who failed to see it coming. It also gives the lie to the notion that the world is increasingly run by the marketing needs of global corporations.

AB had paid \$20 million (£12 million) for its Budweiser brand to be one of 12 official sponsors of next year's World Cup. It had a category-exclusive deal. For this, among other privileges, it would be the sole beer to be allocated perimeter advertising in the stadium. It had reckoned — as

had Fifa — that this money would speak loudly, and the French would come to some kind of compromise that involved bending its law.

AB thought it might persuade the French to leave the perimeter boards blank and let the Budweiser logo be superimposed on the worldwide television transmission outside France via new technology known as virtual advertising.

It was wrong. The French stood firm. AB then appealed over the Government's head, to the European Union. Here, the brewer ran into a new nightmare: EU lawyers, who this week decided to postpone by six months a decision on whether to support AB's appeal against the French legislation at the European Court of Justice.

In frustration, AB sold its perimeter rights for some \$10 million to Casio, the Japanese electronics group. (Budweiser will still be involved with the World Cup, and use the logo next year.)

AB will be annoyed. It feels it has a right to advertise a legal product, and the male "Joe Sixpack" audience for the World Cup is far more suited to the Budweiser brand than, say, the Olympics. For adver-

tising bodies the implications are disturbing. After the belated decision to ban tobacco advertising and sponsorship, this failure to overturn a member state's local legislation is potentially very damaging.

The EU lawyers also put off making a decision on the German Government's curbs on customer loyalty programmes. And the Greeks have banned TV adverts for toys from 7am to 10pm.

The worry for the Advertising Association (AA) lobby group in Britain is that we have relatively liberal ad regulations in sectors such as toys, but are conservative when it comes to such things as nudity in ads. Many battles lie ahead. The AA has seen how tobacco ads were subject to endless EU horse-trading, and warned that drink would be next. However, it remained



confident that manufacturers would have the stomach for a fight. Now that the maker of the world's biggest-selling beer has given in, a dangerous precedent has been set.

France's intransigence is therefore in stark contrast to the Labour Government's U-turn over the tobacco issue. Most observers had expected the French to compromise because the forces of big business would prove too great (look at Formula One).

They were wrong. And, although the week's developments must be viewed as a threat to future advertising freedoms within the EU, there is still something perversely refreshing about Fifa and its sponsors being taken by surprise, and not having things all their own way.

THE FRENCH are consistently underrated by the Anglo-American-dominated advertising world. Meanwhile, in Europe their two leading agency networks, Publicis and Euro RSCG,

have supplanted Britain's Cordiant and WPP and the American networks to become the region's largest.

Outside Europe they are much weaker, especially in the crucial US market. Euro RSCG has tried to solve this problem through acquisition, while Publicis, run by the French Maurice (Levy), has enjoyed an uneasy alliance with the giant True North, formerly FCB.

It is fair to say that Maurice Levy has almost as many fingers in various pies as Maurice Saatchi. What's more, the egos involved are of a scale unfamiliar to even the average adman — and that's saying something.

Levy — who brokered Nestlé's acquisition of Perrier and won the Perrier account soon afterwards — and True North do not get on, to put it mildly. They endured each other's

barely contained contempt because they needed representation in each other's region.

This marriage of convenience has broken down over the past two years. True North

tried to dissociate itself from Publicis and launched a friendly bid for the smaller Bozell network instead. Levy's response was typical. Last week True North was the target of a counter bid from Publicis, its largest shareholder, despite a warning from the giant SC Johnson client that such a move would be unacceptable.

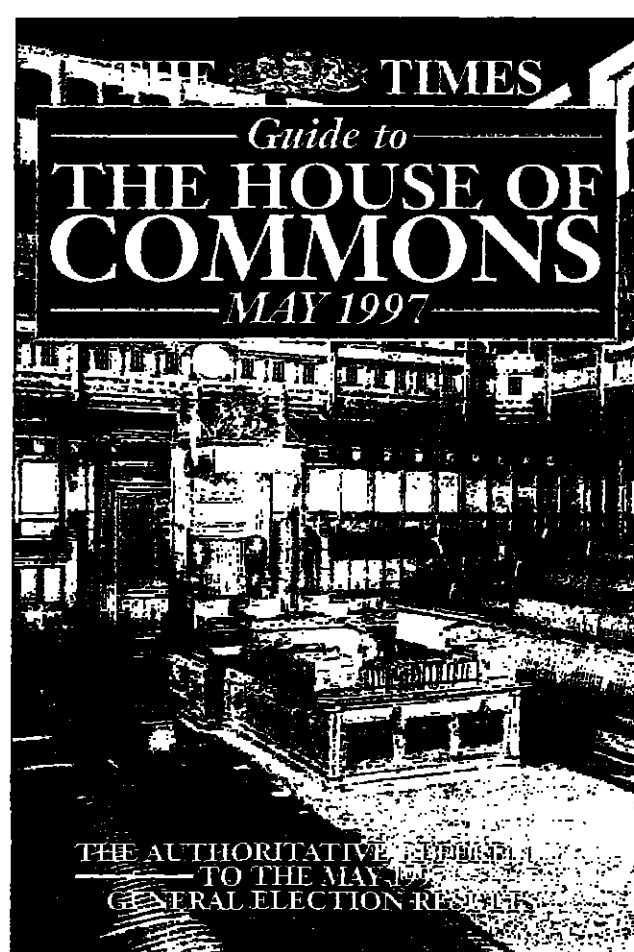
This week a Chicago judge placed a temporary restraining order preventing Levy from supplanting the Bozell deal amid claim and counter-claim of illicit approaches to directors, burgled hotel rooms, papers stolen from waste-paper bins and teams of private detectives.

The affair makes Maurice Saatchi's ousting from Saatchi & Saatchi look tame. It proves the struggle to get out of the elephant's graveyard of global mid-sized players is becoming ever more desperate. And this particular battle will get nastier still.

Stefano Hatfield is Editor of Campaign.

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**TENNIS**



RACING: TWO TALENTED BUT CONTRASTING PERFORMERS OFFER OPTIMISM FOR NEW YEAR

# Grey Shot fires Festival warning salvo

By CHRIS McGRATH

RACING approaches Christmas with a bleakly preoccupied air, fretting and scowling over the fiscal predicament highlighted by Sheikh Mohammed's Gmcrack speech. Any inclination to humber, however, dispersed yesterday among followers of National Hunt racing, who could celebrate — in Grey Shot and Copper Boy — two good reasons for looking forward, with impatient enthusiasm, to the new year.

Jump racing has never really been about money, so it seemed entirely appropriate that it should fall to two midweek backwaters, Taunton and Fakenham, to generate a liberating, tidal sense of adventure. Not that you could



Grey Shot is earmarked for the Cheltenham Festival after making an impressive first appearance over hurdles at Taunton yesterday

**RICHARD EVANS**  
Nap: Dawn Leader  
(120 Cheltenham)  
Dawn Leader can maintain Jim Old's rich vein of form by marking a winning debut over hurdles. The winner of two successive races, the six-year-old has schooled well at home and is highly regarded.

**NB: Mentmore Towers**  
(340 Cheltenham)

ask for two more different animals. Grey Shot, indeed, is something of an interloper. Lean and elegant, he arrived at Taunton with the swagger of a horse whose autumn's work included a course record at the headquarters of Flat racing.

His performance, when making all in the Jockey Club Cup at Newmarket in October, had exceeded even his heroic Goodwood Cup success the previous summer. He treated his rivals for the Somerset County Gazette Novices' Hurdle with disdain, leading throughout and strolling home 23 lengths clear of Village King.

The grey's hurdling was thoroughly competent for Richard Dunwoody, if not so

fluid as Zaralaska, a similar recent Flat recruit. What pleased his trainer, Ian Balding, is that he evidently enjoys his new pastime, as Coral noted in offering 20-1 (from 33-1) against him winning the Smurfit Champion Hurdle.

"I hope in due course he might be in that class," Balding said. "But it would be pretty say now that he is being targeted at the race. We'll find him another race after Christmas, but he'll have no more than two before he goes to the

Cheltenham Festival — for something I would think he's the best horse to have been to Taunton for a while, but it was like watching a group for Jeff Smith [his owner] and myself. We were very nervous."

Copper Boy, by contrast, is a colossus of a horse, hewn from the bedrock of National Hunt. While the Dalgely Seamans-ICI Novices' Chase at Fakenham is not the first place you would seek a prospective champion, it would be rash to

neglect his 17-length win as some provincial sideshow. Despite his physique, Copper Boy is not a natural jumper of fences, and there is a perverse fragility to him. After his impressive start at Newbury a month ago, Bob Buckler, his trainer, decided to find a small race somewhere to give him more confidence. Nonetheless, Copper Boy yesterday encountered a decent sort of novice in Josh Clifford's Lord Rooble, who had made such a taking start to his

chasing career at Huntingdon, Fakenham, moreover, a tight circuit that would constrict the extravagant gallop of Copper Boy.

Yet he was able to bludgeon his nimble opponent out of the race in the back straight for the final time. In fact, Lord Rooble had become so exhausted by his efforts to keep in touch that he eventually lost second; Copper Boy, meanwhile, had jumped safely for Brendan Powell and crossed the line with his ears pricked.

"We've done the job we wanted," Buckler said. "He has not got that many miles on the clock, and we didn't want to frighten him. You could put him off quite easily, and for now we are inclined to wait before going big with him."

The Dorset trainer — seeking his third consecutive best season — knows that Copper Boy has had only eight races, and his prudence will perhaps extend to preserving Copper Boy from the crude examination of the Festival.

## Mentmore Towers can build on Haydock promise

CHELTENHAM CHANNEL 4



1.55: Stormtracker, while a fine jumper, is hindered by his preference for faster ground, as he does not have much of a change of gear. Oddly, all his rivals generally share that preference for firmer going. Among them, Young Hustler must confirm that he retains ability, while Harwell Lad, who capped his reformation in the spring by winning the Whitbread, makes little appeal on his return.

Avro Anson has a touch of class and, having run well first time out last season, sets the standard — but he emphatically favours faster conditions, and remains relatively inexperienced over fences. That leaves the well-treated Yorkshire Gale, predictably out of his depth in the Hennessy but a winner here four times already, including a victory in this race last year.

2.30: Noble Colours, allowed to steal a similar race here last month, is again likely to dictate matters — though it is hard to picture him setting things up for Barna Boy, for whom conditions were perfect in the hectic County Hurdle at the Festival.

Doctor, beaten when odds-on for his return, is nonetheless the one to beat — a task best entrusted to the Lady Harries-trained Tibetan, who finally retrieved earlier promise at Huntingdon last time. He can follow up off a 5lb higher mark, the runner-up, New Inn, having since run a cracker at Sandown. Non Vintage needs things to go his way, while Mister Rm must wait for firm ground.

3.05: For a horse with so many problems, Pongo War-

ing has done well to win four of his last seven starts. The handicapper has extended his sympathy by raising him just 2lb for winning at Haydock last time — an accurate reflection on the uncompetitive nature of that race.

Henrietta Knight's stable is certainly in form, and likewise that of the mud-loving With Impunity, who ran out of opposition over the National fences at Aintree. If his trainer were in similarly good form, Fall Of Boucse would appear strongly and he could nonetheless make the most of what looks — judging on his Sandown third in the spring — a very fair mark. Conditions were much too testing last time.

3.40: Martin Pipe runs five, but Gysart looks the only one of interest today, having gamely denied the promising Young Kenny here last time (up 6lb for that). It took another Pipe horse, Desano's Beeno, to defy a progressive type in Mentmore Towers on his Haydock reappearance. A smart novice, the five-year-old pulled clear of the third and, back up in trip, looks one to follow with the benefit of that run. In At The Top impressed with his attitude last winter, but his stamina is suspect.

CHRIS McGRATH

CHLTHENHAM	
THUNDER	GOING: GOOD
12.10 The French Furze	1.55 Avro Anson
12.45 Yahril	2.30 Noble Colours
1.20 Mountain Storm	3.05 Full Of Bounce
	3.40 MENTMORE TOWERS (nap)

12.10 EAGLE PEST CONTROL THREE-YEAR OLD NOVICES HURDLE (5-9-0, £3,500; 2m 10f) (18 runners)	
101-12111 THE FRENCH FURZE 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111
102-12111 SOUND APPAL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111
103-12111 SOUND APPAL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111
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120-12111 SOUND APPAL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111
121-12111 SOUND APPAL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111

12.45 YES-NO-WAIT-SORRIES CHRIS COLEY RACING NOVICES CHASE (5-9-0, £2,110; 2m 10f) (3 runners)	
101-12111 EAGLE PEST CONTROL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111
102-12111 EAGLE PEST CONTROL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111
103-12111 EAGLE PEST CONTROL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111

1.20 CHELTENHAM SPONSORSHIP CLUB NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (5-9-0, £2,110; 2m 10f) (18 runners)	
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102-12111 EAGLE PEST CONTROL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111
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121-12111 EAGLE PEST CONTROL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111

1.55 C.F. ROBERTS ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS HANDICAP CHASE (10-0-0, 2m 10f) (5 runners)	
101-12111 EAGLE PEST CONTROL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111
102-12111 EAGLE PEST CONTROL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111
103-12111 EAGLE PEST CONTROL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111
104-12111 EAGLE PEST CONTROL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111
105-12111 EAGLE PEST CONTROL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111

2.30 CHUBB FINE HANDICAP HURDLE (5-9-0, 2m 10f) (7 runners)	
101-12111 EAGLE PEST CONTROL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111
102-12111 EAGLE PEST CONTROL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111
103-12111 EAGLE PEST CONTROL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111
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107-12111 EAGLE PEST CONTROL 22 (JF, 5-9-0) M P. 11-1	A. J. 12111

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	3354-60	FLYING LEAD (22 (J.F, 5-9-0))	S Simpson	5-1-0	N Williamson	193
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	3354-63	FLYING LEAD (22 (J.F, 5-9-0))	S Simpson	5-1-0	N Williamson	196
	3354-64	FLYING LEAD (22 (J.F, 5-9-0))	S Simpson	5-1-0	N Williamson	197
	3354-65	FLYING LEAD (22 (J.F, 5-9-0))	S Simpson	5-1-0	N Williamson	198
	3354-66	FLYING LEAD (22 (J.F, 5-9-0))	S Simpson	5-1-0	N Williamson	199
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RUGBY UNION

# Brittle charts new path for English game

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

CLIFF BRITTLE, the chairman of the Rugby Football Union (RFU) board of management, yesterday challenged the game at large to accept a vision of English rugby in the new millennium that tears up most of the preconceptions now prevalent.

In a policy document that he will take to the country next month, Brittle outlines a clear division between the professional and amateur arms and insists that the majority of clubs in England — and in other countries — will have to revert to amateurism because the finances of the game do not give them any choice.

He addresses what he describes as the "helplessness and hopelessness" felt by clubs up and down the country by proposing the creation of five provincial unions, each with their own professional executive but run on semi-autonomous lines and with the power to structure the game, within their own geographical area, in the way they believe to be the most suitable.

Brittle has worked on "Rugby Restructure 2000" with a close-knit group of supporters, including Fran Cotton and Graeme Cattermole, and in consultation with the national team management, all of whom were at Twickenham yesterday to hear his presentation. That it has yet to be debated by the full council of the RFU, the status of whose members would be much reduced under the terms of the proposals, is neither here nor there if the game faces up to fundamental decisions on how it should be run in the future.

In effect, Brittle has abandoned the principle of a "seamless" game and seeks a professional arm consisting of Club England and the English Rugby Partnership clubs, at present numbering 24. Though the definition of amateurism has yet to be settled, all other clubs would form the amateur backbone of the game, with their own competitions building into an amateur England team that would play its own representative matches.

"The present situation is unsustainable, and that's not just in our union but worldwide," Brittle said. "Unless we do something about it, and quickly, then the sport is in serious danger. I have spoken with other unions, including those from the southern hemisphere, and the word on their lips is 'amateur'."

It is Brittle's contention that poor financial planning by previous RFU administrations has created a situation in which money is draining away, in which clubs are reducing the numbers of teams they run and administrators at junior clubs are being overloaded with work. Money coming into the game is being used to pay players and coaches rather than being allocated in ways that create effective growth at all levels.

He acknowledges that investment must be made in Club England — the national team at senior, A and under-21 levels — because the RFU's revenue streams stand or fall by their success.

Brittle also advocates the establishment of RFU TV, a television company run by the union and producing its own signal from Twickenham. That would be a key component in raising revenue from its present annual total of around £50 million to some £300 million within the next ten years.

"Over the next few years there will be massive changes in broadcasting and Internet services," Brittle said. Existing contracts, broadcast and commercial, would be honoured but most expire around 2000 and Brittle seeks to build a healthier future for the RFU over the following period. To do that, however, he seeks agreement over the next seven months that would involve the management powers of the RFU council and committees being handed over to the management board, to the professional staff in their designated areas of expertise and to the provincial unions.

"The present culture and structure of the RFU is an impediment to the development of the game in England," Brittle said. Armed with the results of a poll of member clubs, he will take his vision on the road in January and hopes that the package can be implemented, in practice or in theory, by the annual meeting in July so that a stronger, leaner game will emerge in the new millennium.



The sky is the limit for Lewis Capes, according to Bob Dwyer, the Leicester coach, who has been instrumental in the former American footballer making the switch to rugby union. Capes, pictured after signing for the Midlands club yesterday, is likely to play in the second row as he made such an impression in the lineouts when playing for the Leicester Development XV last weekend, taking every ball thrown, by Leicester and the opposition. "Lewis has the highest jump in the club, which is unusual for someone of his size," Dwyer

said. Dwyer is convinced that Capes, son of Geoff, the former Great Britain shot putter, can make a successful transition, even at the age of 27 and even though he has not played rugby since he left school. "Of course, it's a club yesterday, is likely to play in the second row as he made such an impression in the lineouts when playing for the Leicester Development XV last weekend, taking every ball thrown, by Leicester and the opposition. "Lewis has the highest jump in the club, which is unusual for someone of his size," Dwyer

into a club like this and expect to play. But the club puts a lot of store in developing players. I know I have to be developed, and that's what I want." Capes will undoubtedly find it hard to break into the Leicester first team as the club's first-choice pack contains seven internationals and four members of the British Isles squad that toured South Africa last summer. However, Geoff Capes remains in no doubt as to his son's prowess. "He's quicker than Lomu, stronger than Lomu and bigger than Lomu," Capes Sr said yesterday.

## Rodber may resume for Northampton

By DAVID HANDS



Rodber: neurological scan

TIM RODBER, concussed while leading an English Rugby Partnership XV against the New Zealanders at Bristol last month, is likely to return to action with Northampton tomorrow. Rodber has trained with the squad to play London Irish at Sunbury and is expected to play, although the XV will not be confirmed until tomorrow.

The recommended rest period for a concussion is 21 days, but International Rugby Football Board regulations offer a proviso: depending upon medical advice, Rodber, who was injured on November 25, has been cleared after having a neurological scan at Northampton General Hospital. "We have pulled out all the stops to make sure things have

been done correctly," Ian McGeechan, the director of rugby at Franklin's Gardens, said. Rodber will be championing the bit to return after missing England's four autumn internationals, not only to re-establish his credentials with the new team management, but also because Northampton are three from the bottom of the Allied Dunbar Premiership first division. They have won only once in five outings (against Leicester), although, as McGeechan observed, only four points separate the bottom club from Sale, who are third.

"The sooner we get ourselves into action, the better," he said. North-

ampton, however, will be without Martin Bayfield, the England lock, who is still struggling with inflammation to the groin. Wasps, ahead of Northampton on points difference, welcome back Alex King at fly half for their derby game with Harlequins at the Stoop memorial ground and give Jonathan Ions a run at open-side flanker.

In a week in which there has been growing criticism of the number of overseas players in the Premiership, Saracens give debut to Roberto Grau, the Argentine prop, and Gavin Johnson, the South Africa full back, against Bath at Warford on Sunday. Saracens, unbeaten in six outings, lead the first division, but face a stern examination.

CRICKET: SOUTH AFRICA'S UNDER-19 TEAM TAKES TOLL OF ENGLAND WHILE SENIOR TEAM CONTINUES TO PROSPER IN AUSTRALIA

## Franks warms to the task

FROM JOHN STERN IN CAPE TOWN

THE SAPPING Cape Town heat took its toll on England Under-19's inexperienced touring party, many of whom have played little cricket abroad, towards the end of the first day of the first four-day international match against South Africa Under-19 at Newlands yesterday.

Having clawed their way back during the post-lunch session, England were unable to contain South Africa's middle order, and Grant Elliott in particular.

The home side finished the day on 285 for six, fractionally ahead on points. On the basis of recent under-19 series between Pakistan and these two sides, a score in excess of 250 is likely to be a challenging one. However, this is a good wicket with mostly even bounce and it is likely to become quicker as the game progresses.

Perhaps inexperience also was also evident in the number of overs bowled, although in these days of slow over-rates it would be churlish to criticise a team too heavily for bowling 97 overs in a day.

However, Elliott and Jacques Rudolph, the left-

hand, flourished off the last ten overs, against the new ball, and added 82 in only 85 minutes for the seventh wicket. Elliott, who played for South Africa Under-19 this time last year against Pakistan, pulled the last ball of the day from Graham Napier to the mid-wicket boundary.

England, who lost the toss, made an excellent start through their captain, Paul

### SCOREBOARD

**SOUTH AFRICA UNDER-19: First Innings**  
A. Purnick c Parnell b Franks 25  
A. Gien c Franks b Swann 25  
J. de Noogre b Franks 15  
M. Street c and b Swann 15  
M. van Wyk b Franks 15  
G. Elliott not out 85  
M. Lumb not out 11  
J. Rudolph not out 19  
Extras (b 3, lb 4, w 4, nb 0) 12  
Total (6 wkts) 285  
M. Gien, R. Parnell and V. Moseley to bat.  
FALL OF WICKETS 1-12, 2-12, 3-131, 4-154, 5-164, 6-203  
OVERS: Logan 19-2-66-0; Franks 24-6-44-3; Napier 8-1-26-0; Schofield 15-1-54-0; Swann 33-5-89-3  
**ENGLAND UNDER-19: R. W. T. Key, S. D. Parnell, J. N. Flanagan, G. P. Swann, M. A. Gough, G. R. Haywood, G. R. Napier, J. J. Franks, G. P. Schofield, T. J. Wilson, R. J. Logan**  
Umpires: P. Reynolds and J. Parnell

Franks, of Nottinghamshire, who dismissed Andrew Purnick and Justin De Nobrega in the space of five balls. However, from 12 for two, South Africa recovered to be 107 for two at lunch, thanks to Matthew Street, their captain, who, surprisingly, has not played first or second-team cricket for Gauteng, his province.

Street's timing was superb and he reached the boundary ten times in making 79 before he was caught and bowled by Graeme Swann, the off spinner.

By that stage, England had regained their hold on the game. Swann bowled a fine spell of 16 overs, unchanged between lunch and tea, taking two for 29.

Franks also bowled with impressive control after lunch, revelling in a fascinating contest with Street. He conceded only ten runs in ten overs after lunch and took the wicket of Morné van Wyk. Unfortunately, he was less effective with the new ball, but he will be fresh this morning and hoping to prevent South Africa from reaching 350.

## Tough route lies ahead for England

AFTER several restful days in Hyderabad, the England women's team were made brutally aware of the obstacles to be overcome if they are to retain the World Cup (Thrusi Petropoulos writes).

A 3.30am alarm call preceded a seven-hour train ride to Vijayawada, where they play Pakistan today.

Vijayawada is an industrial town 175 miles east of Hyderabad seldom visited by tourists. The only great attraction is a temple dedicated to the city's patron goddess, Kanaka Durga, goddess of riches, power and benevolence. Benevolence this place has in abundance: riches and power it most certainly lacks.

England should easily beat a weak Pakistan side that lost to Denmark by eight wickets on Wednesday. Furthermore, the luckless Pakistanis' train journey to Vijayawada followed a flight from Bangalore to Hyderabad that was delayed for more than five hours.

## Klusener keeps his nerve

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

CHRIS HARRIS, who needed to hit the last ball for six to give New Zealand a World Series Cup win over South Africa in Hobart yesterday, was thwarted by Lance Klusener, who produced a delivery of near-perfect length that Harris could only edge for four, leaving South Africa the winners by one run.

Klusener, who won his second successive man-of-the-match award after making 37 and taking three for 46, had inspired South Africa to a 45-run win over Australia in Melbourne on Tuesday with a return of five for 24.

Although South Africa are top of the table, their batsmen have still to exceed 200 in four matches and 174 for eight against New Zealand was another disappointing effort.

Only when Klusener, who went in at No 3, took a shine to the bowling of Shayne O'Connor did South Africa threaten to post a big total. First with Herschelle Gibbs, and then with Pat Symcox, Klusener kept the bat at around four an over, despite Chris Cairns delivering a miserly opening spell of seven overs for 12 runs.

Then Harris and Gavin Larsen combined to slow the rate to a crawl. At 71, Symcox hit a return catch to Harris, then Hansie Cronje and Klusener were run out as three wickets fell for two runs. Jonny Rhodes, trying to paddle a ball from Daniel Vettori down to fine leg, was bowled round his legs.

When Shaun Pollock hit Nathan Astle for four in the fortieth over, it was the first boundary for 54 minutes. Jacques Kallis went for 45, after Harris juggled and finally held his second return catch, but Pollock stayed until the last ball, from which he was caught in the deep.

New Zealand started dis-

trously, losing their opening pair in Klusener's first over. Cairns smashed five quick fours before he swung once too often at Klusener and was bowled.

Stephen Fleming and Craig McMillan grafted hard but found even singles difficult. Impatience finally cost both their wickets. Fleming driving loosely at Symcox and being caught at deep mid-off and McMillan holding out to mid-wicket off a full toss.

Adam Parore was run out by Kallis, Roger Twisse chipped to Gary Kirsten at mid-wicket and New Zealand were 111 for seven. Harris, who made 37, and Vettori (25) regained most of the lost ground, but their partnership of 62 was not quite enough.



Doherty: made to work

HOCKEY: WORLD CUP TRAINING MAKES INCREASING DEMANDS ON ENGLAND PLAYERS

## Loughtonians hoping to cut Cannock lead

By SYDNEY FRISKIN

THE 27 contenders for places in England's World Cup squad who had been involved in a three-day training camp at Lillesham returned to their clubs yesterday to prepare for their round of matches in the National League on Sunday, the last before the winter break.

Cannock will attempt to stretch their four-point lead in the premier division with an unchanged side against Old Loughtonians, who have a couple of scores to settle. Earlier in the season Cannock beat them 2-1 and knocked them out of the EHA Cup a fortnight ago. These were the only clubs to emerge from the double-header skirmishes last week with full points. Loughtonians will travel with the Old Thompson party, but knee trouble means that he is unlikely to play.

Although Southgate will be without John Shaw, who is abroad, they are expected to have the edge over their

visitors. Beeston, who put them out of the cup, while Reading, in sixth position, have a chance to make up ground in their home match against Doncaster, who lost the first encounter 4-1 but have since raised their game.

Reading will be without Kochar, who has gone into hospital for a leg operation and will be out of action until the new year. England's next training session, in Sicily for a week from January 7, under their new coach, Barry Dancer, will handicap Reading, who are taking part in the Los Reys tournament in Barcelona at the same time.

A knee operation means that Luckes, the East Grinstead goalkeeper, will miss the visit to Canterbury and with Griffiths and McConnell unavailable, the defence is well below strength. Canterbury, too, are without their goalkeeper, Triggs, who has not recovered from an injury received last week.

## Students and clubs face testing programme

By CATHY HARRIS

ENGLAND'S intensive build-up to the 1998 women's hockey World Cup is placing increasing pressure on the 13 students in the training squad, who are trying to meet their playing and academic demands. It is also expected to take its toll on clubs who will be required to release players for mid-week training camps.

The international programme before the World Cup, in May, includes a tour to Australia next month, possible matches at home against Russia, Scotland and Australia, and away to Holland, and a four nations' tournament in the United States.

One member of the England party, Lucilla Wright, is studying for her A levels. Kirsty Bowden, 19, the midfield player, a second-year law student at Birmingham University, has been given permission to sit her examinations in August.

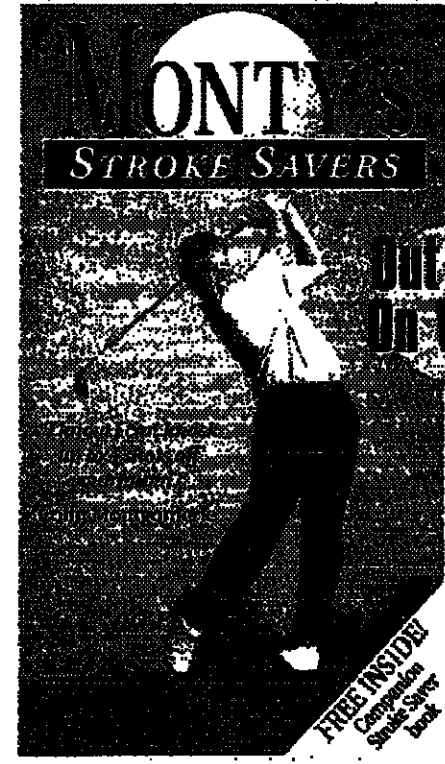
Fiona Greenham, the England

Under-21 captain, is studying for an MSc in information technology at Loughborough University. "It's not an insurmountable problem and I still believe it's possible to combine work and sport," she said.

When the Women's National Hockey League resumes after the winter break in February, clubs will lose their England players to four midweek training camps. Maggie Souyave, the England coach, said: "The priority is the World Cup and no one in their right mind would disagree. It could have been a lot worse and although I've tried hard to consider the situation, but clubs will be inconvenienced."

Olton's coach, Gavin Featherstone, understands, but said: "You can't run roughshod over the national league. A club coach needs at least nine weeks to build up consistency and continuity. Our young international players are on a frightening merry-go-round."

## Help improve your man's technique this Christmas



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## TELEVISION CHOICE

# Dunkirk beaches revisited



### Crystal and Williams join the gang (C4)

\* de

**FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 87.6-89.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 80.2-82.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.8. LW 198. FM 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 583, 906. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1053, 1089.**  
Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomas, Gregory and John McLamanga.



# Men behaving as though the end is Nye

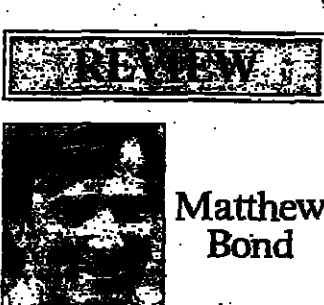
There was a valiant effort to make *Men Behaving Badly* (BBC1) last night, which smacked of Simon Nye, its creator, thinking he ought to slip in one with a bit of finality about it — just in case. This you see, was the last in the current series and with something as enormously successful as *Men Behaving Badly*, you never quite know. Can they be bothered to do it again? Some 13 million of us and one Head of Comedy at the BBC will be hoping the answer is yes.

But just in case it isn't, Nye — whose writing has been on the verge of the end of another era with this episode. So a series that began with the improbable ending of one when Tony and Deborah finally got together, closed with the ending of another. The boys' sofa, which over the years has become something of a cultural icon, had to go — it was infested with fleas.

Short of Nye resolving to give up writing disgusting jokes, I can't think of anything that threatened the future of the series more seriously. Without a sofa stuffed with two decades of memories and a lot of other things too awful to mention in the cold light of morning, it is possible for men to behave badly at all?

The same thought occurred to Gary, as he and Tony enjoyed a final slouch, perched — for reasons that are difficult to explain — on a fairly sensitive part of that famously rampant chair. "Have you ever noticed how people over 48 years of age are never comfortable on a sofa, they always want a chair? Too weird for Tony. Well, they're preparing for death, mate."

I find all sounds too ghastly for you, I quite understand. But some of the alternatives around last night were pretty ghastly too, without being funny at all. Indeed, the only person who might have smiled just a little during last night's *Men Behaving Badly* (Channel 4) was Dr Jack Corningham, the Agriculture Minister, currently enduring a little spot of unpopularity. Banning the boys' bits of cows seemed positively restrained after this disconcerting



Matthew Bond

reprise of some of the science behind the BSE crisis.

If it's style was conspiratorial and alarmist (by the end you could have been forgiven for thinking that anything that either mood or bled might be a good idea), the content was cleverer than that. We might have started with the old cliché of the lone figure walking through a desolate landscape (this man is a former

government scientist...?) but it quickly improved.

Assuming Ian McGill was who he says he was and had done what he said he had, he had some deeply disturbing (but not altogether surprising) things to say about the strange pressures that scientists have worked under ever since the first British cow came over all wobbly. Such as why the relevant committee never saw an American research paper that showed monkeys contracted a BSE-like condition after being fed about one ounce of infected material.

Or why the likely link between BSE and another spongiform encephalopathy, in cats, one of McGill's own areas of research, was allegedly censored by government scientists. They deny it. Or why there has been such a long delay in commencing research to discover whether the disease has come from scrapie-infected sheep in the first place, has now returned

to the sheep population in its new form. Suddenly that European Union call for a ban on lamb chops didn't seem quite so unreasonable.

It's easy to get carried away, especially in the face of such a well presented argument. But most of the scientists had not — they were alarmed enough to hope that their children could have an early taste for chicken, but realistic enough to know that for the rest of us they could do no more than point out that there was an as-yet unquantifiable risk to eating beef and possibly lamb... that we might like to bear in mind while we are shopping. If half what the programme alleged is true, the official inquiry into the handling of the BSE crisis could be dynamic.

On BBC2, *Scare Stories: Going Overboard* seemed at least at first glance, but it is the second glance that is making this

series so unsettling. It is not the debunking of accepted environmental wisdoms that is the problem (in this case the dumping of waste at sea) but the manner in which it is debunked. What, for example, had all these Greenpeace campaigners been told which persuaded them to contribute to a programme that appeared to show that they were a cynically manipulative and b) wrong?

There was nothing wrong with deep-sea dumping, we were told by that well known marine scientist, er, Francine Stock. This was the other thing about the programme — highly contentious points were delivered by an unqualified voice (forgive me Francine, if you really are the Jacques Cousteau of Television Central) that we associate with objectivity. *Scare Stories*, however, is provocatively, even gloriously, subjective. Nothing wrong with that at all — just don't pretend otherwise.

## BBC1

- 6.00am Breakfast (52763)
- 7.00am BBC Breakfast News (50831)
- 8.00am Good Living (126712)
- 9.25am Sky Sports Challenge (124725)
- 9.50am X-Ray (129610)
- 10.30am Can't Knock, Won't Cope (175488)
- 10.55am The Really Useful Show (175488)
- 11.35am Change That (397305)
- 12.00am News (1) and weather (498312)
- 12.05pm Call My Bluff (2804305)
- 12.55pm Give Us A Clue (537783)
- 1.00pm News (1) and weather (6218)
- 1.30pm Regional News (1744034)
- 1.40pm The Weather Show (8634083)
- 1.45pm Neighbours (1) (86873748)
- 2.10pm Petrol (1) (1055638)
- 3.00pm Vets' School Their five years continue study over, the would-be vets take their final exams (1) (5331)
- 3.30pm Playdays (7703102) 3.50pm Dinobabies (7703036) 4.10pm Casper (3222218) 4.35pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 5.00pm Newsround (1) (86873748) 5.10pm Blue Peter (1) (86873748)
- 5.25pm Neighbours (1) (1) (508247)
- 6.00pm News (1) and weather (367)
- 6.30pm Regional News (347)
- 7.00pm Weekend Watchdog: with Anne Robinson (1) (7812)
- 7.30pm Top of the Pops (1) (531)
- 8.00pm 999 Lifelines: A Christmas crisis when festivities were ruined by two madmen, a car crash, a dog attack and a left the teenage rider bleeding to death. Plus: how to spot the tell-tale signs of meningitis (1) (5300)
- 8.30pm Only Fools and Horses: Sleeping Dogs Lie. The Trotters agree to be dog-sitters while Boyce and Marlene go on holiday (1) (1) (2397)
- 9.00pm News (1) and weather (4947)
- 9.30pm Hatty Watford Investigates: Serving the Community Hatty agrees to track down the gang of thugs responsible for attacks on local restaurant owners. With Patricia Routledge (1) (86873748)
- 10.20pm The Woman Years: Impassioned Rory Bremner's debut, and interviews with Robin Williams, Michael Caine, Joan Rivers, Shelley Long and George Burns to name but a few (1) (192270) WALE: 10.20pm For One Night Only. Aled Jones performs a series of showstopping classics (192270) 10.50pm The Woman Years (27757) 11.20pm Film: Foul Play (55380) 1.15pm Chris de Burgh in Concert (433619) 2.15pm News (195954) 2.20pm BBC News 24
- 10.50pm Foul Play (1978) Comedy adventure, with Goldie Hawn, Chevy Chase, Burgess Meredith and Dudley Moore. An innocent woman gets caught up in a plot to murder the Pope, but can't convince anyone she's in danger — apart from a detective who has fallen hopelessly in love with her. Directed by Colin Higgins (1) (86873748)
- 12.45pm Chris de Burgh in Concert (436708)
- 1.45pm Weather (721313)
- 1.50pm BBC News 24

## BBC2

- 6.00am Social Science: A Global Culture? (83744) 6.30pm Your Place or Mine? (21831)
- 7.00pm Sea: Hear, Breakfast - News (1) (327102)
- 7.15pm Teletubbies (1) (2456102) 7.40pm Yaky Ducky (1) (86873748) 8.05pm Smart (1) (501198) 8.30pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 8.55pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 9.05pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 9.30pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 9.55pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 10.00pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 10.25pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 10.50pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 11.00pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 11.25pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 11.50pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 12.00pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 12.25pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 12.50pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 1.00pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 1.25pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 1.50pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 2.00pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 2.25pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 2.50pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 3.00pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 3.25pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 3.50pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 4.00pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 4.25pm The Simpsons (1) (86873748) 4.50pm The Simpsons 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